This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

A 837,377

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
1817
LIBRARIES

THE

TRANSVAAL AND THE BOERS

A BRIEF HISTORY

BY

W. E. GARRETT FISHER, M.A.

Vilius argentum est auro, virtutibus aurum

LONDON: CHAPMAN AND HALL, LD.

1896

[*All rights reserved*]

DT
921
.F54

Posthumus
Librarian
5-2-1923

RICHARD CLAY AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BUNGAY.

TO

D. W. S.

423343

PREFACE

THE affairs of the South African Republic though they scarcely can be said, in this country to come home to men's business and bosoms, have given rise of late to so much discussion that it seems worth while to present a brief historical account of the Transvaal Boer and his country. History, as Sir John Seeley and Mr. Freeman were so fond of insisting, is but past politics, as politics are present history. Thus, whilst I have studiously abstained from presenting any opinion which is not immediately based on facts, or from forming any of those prospects which will so easily commend themselves to the reader, I venture to think that this little book will be found to have a real and direct bearing upon the most puzzling South African questions of the moment. To know how a thing has come to be is the essential pre-

liminary to knowing what it is; and those who will follow me in seeing how the Transvaal and its inhabitants have reached their present stage of being will, at least, be all the better qualified to abstain from prophesying as to their future history.

"To equip so small a book with a preface is, I am half afraid, to sin against proportion." And perhaps I should not have ventured upon erecting a portico to my small edifice, but that I have the pleasant duty of exposing in it the names of those earlier writers who have chiefly aided in my task. First, I must pay my thanks to Mr. G. M. Theal, without whose impartial and philosophic labours no adequate account of the early days of South African colonisation would as yet be practicable. His *History of South Africa*, with its various corollary volumes, must always be the classical book on the subject, and I have freely borrowed from his toil. Amongst other works that are standards in their kind are Mr. W. P. Greswell's *Geography of Africa South of the Zambesi*, and

Mr. A. H. Keane's *South Africa* in the useful geographical compendium of Mr. Stanford; Messrs. Hatch and Chalmers's *Gold Mines of the Rand*, Mr. Goldmann's *History of the Witwatersrand*, and, for those who love statistics, the excellent *Argus Annuals* and the indispensable *Statesman's Year Book*. To the compilers of many bulky volumes of Blue Books and official publications of all kinds I desire to express gratitude, tempered by fatigue. Among books dealing specially with the Transvaal I am to mention Mr. Nixon's *Complete Story of the Transvaal* and *Among the Boers*, which present a view of Transvaal history, from 1852 to 1884, that is singularly impartial in regard to the strong opinions of the author; Mr. Carter's very interesting *Narrative of the Boer War*, the *Life of Sir Bartle Frere*, and Mr. Aylward's readable *Transvaal of To-day* (1881), which is only trustworthy when its statements have independent corroboration. Many who have travelled amongst the Boers, from the humorous Thunberg and the laborious Sparrmann to that very destructive

Nimrod, Mr. Gordon Cumming, and that delightful writer Captain W. C. Harris, deserve the thanks which must especially be given to Mr. Bunbury, who has left a graphic account of the Boers at the time of the Great Trek, and to the noble Dr. Livingstone, whose *Missionary Travels* and *Personal Life*, by the Reverend Dr. Blaikie, are a mine of information and pleasure. A modern traveller, Mr. W. L. Distant, has also been of much service, besides many others who will, I trust, accept this acknowledgment in full of their claims.

W. E. G. F.

LONDON
March 18, 1896.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION—THE BOERS AT HOME . . .	1
I.	THE FOUNDATION OF CAPE COLONY . . .	22
II.	THE BOERS AND THEIR ANCESTORS	39
III.	THE TRANSVAAL AND ITS NATIVES	52
IV.	THE GREAT TREK AND ITS CAUSES	71
V.	BOERS AND NATIVES IN THE TRANSVAAL .	89
VI.	THE FORMATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC	109
VII.	THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, 1852–1877.	134
VIII.	ENGLAND IN THE TRANSVAAL	156
IX.	THE GROWTH OF DISCONTENT	176
X.	THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE	200

CHAP.		PAGE
XI.	THE TWO CONVENTIONS AND THEIR SEQUEL.	223
XII.	THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD	246
XIII.	THE INCURSION OF OUTLANDERS	261
XIV.	THE STRUGGLE FOR REFORM	273

THE

TRANSVAAL AND THE BOERS

INTRODUCTION

THE BOERS AT HOME

THE Boers of the Transvaal present, or at least presented until within the last ten years, a remarkable instance of a population almost stationary in manners, customs, and education. In European countries, where there is a constant intercourse, both in space and time, between home and foreign lands, between the present and the past, a continual change in these respects is going on with a celerity that increases every year, until many well-meaning persons are positively alarmed at it. Even in the comparatively unprogressive Cape Colony, a great development has taken place, and the social condition of the average Cape Boer,

especially near the towns and among the wealthier classes, is very different to-day from what it was fifty or a hundred years ago. At the Cape, indeed, the word Boer has preserved its old Dutch sense of farmer or peasant, akin to the German *bauer*, and has necessarily none of the peculiar significance that its relative *boor* has acquired in our own language.

But the great majority of the nomad Boer population, cut off from churches, schools, shops, and every kind of social intercourse save with the one or two accessible neighbours and the occasional trader or explorer, have retained to the full the habits, alike in thought and action, of their forefathers. In the Transvaal, more especially, the Boers have jealously secluded themselves from possible influences of change, until the last few years have introduced an element of novelty which even the stubborn Boer tries in vain to resist.

So lately as 1880 a traveller was able truthfully to declare that "the seclusion in which the South African Republic nursed itself so many years had nourished and intensified the prejudices and habits of the race." All critics of insight agree that the Transvaal Boer of to-day is, to all intents

and purposes, one with the Cape Boer of the last century or the nomad farmers of the Great Trek. It is well, then, before entering upon the story of the Transvaal, to consider a few of the accounts given by impartial observers of its most distinctive inhabitants.

It is not very easy, indeed, to ascertain the exact truth about the nature and habits of the Boers in the midst of the contradictory reports that one finds in the works of various travellers. At present, too, there is a certain danger that we may lose sight of the undoubted good qualities of the typical Boer on the one hand, or minimise his numerous faults and anfractuosities on the other, according as our political prepossessions incline us to his side or to that of the Outlanders. Let us, however, at least make an attempt to set politics aside for the present, and endeavour to see the Transvaal farmer as he really is.

The truth seems to be that the Boer, like most human beings, is compact of both good and evil. His best qualities are his stubborn perseverance in the face of difficulty and danger, his genuine family affection, his equally genuine though narrow and antiquated religious spirit, his determination

never to endure injustice, his hospitality to guests of whom he approves. His worst faults are his brutal treatment of the natives, his defect in political honesty, and his curious lack of the Dutch passion for cleanliness and industry. It is a fact that he is usually opposed to what we call "progress," and looks with strong dislike upon the incursion of gold-miners and others who desire to "open up" his country. But whether this is to be accounted as a defect, a good quality, or simply a natural outcome of the Boer's history, in which he has so often seen himself dispossessed of a peaceful life, depends greatly upon the point of view.

One of the earliest and most lifelike sketches of the typical country Boer is that given by the Swedish traveller Sparrmann, who is generally admitted to be a most trustworthy authority. He shows us the Cape farmer far changed in a century from the industry and cleanliness of the original Hollander to a state of virtuous and innocent indolence and dirt: the heat of the climate, the fertility of the soil, and the employment of slaves being the concomitant causes of the alteration.

"It is hardly to be conceived," wrote Sparrmann in 1776, "with what little trouble the Boer gets

into order a field of a moderate size; . . . so that . . . he may be almost said to make the cultivation of it, for the bread he stands in need of for himself and his family, a mere matter of amusement . . . With pleasure, but without the least trouble to himself, he sees the herds and flocks, which constitute his riches, daily and considerably increasing. These are driven to pasture and home again by a few Hottentots or slaves, who likewise make the butter; so that it is almost only with the milking that the farmer, together with his wife and children, concern themselves at all. To do this business, however, he has no occasion to rise before seven or eight o'clock in the morning . . . That they (the Boers) might not put their arms and bodies out of the easy and commodious posture in which they had laid them on the couch when they were taking their afternoon *siesta*, they have been known to receive travellers lying quite still and motionless excepting that they have very civilly pointed out the road by moving their foot to the right or left . . . Among a set of beings so devoted to their ease one might naturally expect to meet with a variety of the most commodious easy chairs and sofas; but the truth is, that they find it much more com-

modious to avoid the trouble of inventing and making them . . . Nor did the inhabitants exhibit much less simplicity and moderation, or, to speak more properly, slovenliness and penury, in their dress than in their furniture . . . The distance at which they are from the Cape may, indeed, be some excuse for their having no other earthenware or china in their houses but what was cracked or broken; but this, methinks, should not prevent them from being in possession of more than one or two old pewter pots, and some few plates of the same metal; so that two people are frequently obliged to eat out of one dish, besides using it for every different article of food that comes upon table. Each guest must bring his knife with him, and for forks they frequently make use of their fingers. The most wealthy farmer here is considered as being well dressed in a jacket of home-made cloth, or something of the kind made of any other coarse cloth, breeches of undressed leather, woollen stockings, a striped waistcoat, a cotton handkerchief about his neck, a coarse calico shirt, Hottentot field-shoes, or else leathern shoes, with brass buckles, and a coarse hat. Indeed, it is not in dress, but in the number and thriving con-

dition of their cattle, and chiefly in the stoutness of their draught-oxen, that these peasants vie with each other. It is likewise by activity and manly actions, and by other qualities that render a man fit for the married state and the rearing of a family, that the youth chiefly obtain the esteem of the fair sex. . . A plain close cap and a coarse cotton gown, virtue and good housewifery, are looked upon by the fair sex as sufficient ornaments for their persons; a flirting disposition, coquetry and paint, would have very little effect in making conquests of young men brought up in so hardy a manner, and who have had so homely and artless an education as the youth in this place. In short, here, if anywhere in the world, one may lead an innocent, virtuous, and happy life."

After all, it is a kindly picture enough that the worthy Swede here draws of a country life at the Cape a century ago. To this day one may take it as fairly representative of the facts in the Transvaal, as far as it goes. It is true, among other things, that the wealthy Boer has fallen a victim to the tyranny of black broadcloth for Sundays and holidays, and that there are a few similar

changes in detail. As to the matter of laziness, it has to be remembered that the Boer had no wants to provide for beyond the purely physical ones of food and shelter. Education, amusement, books, and the thousand other needs that make us toil so strenuously nowadays, were equally foreign to his taste and knowledge, and a provision for his children was assured in the unlimited land itself.

About 1816 the matter was put in a nutshell to the Reverend Mr. Latrobe by one of the most shrewd and sensible farmers of the Cape, on whom he had been urging the advantages of modern methods of scientific agriculture; they had the idea, if not the phrase, even in 1816. "What," said this sensible Boer, "would you have us do? Our only concern is to fill our bellies, to get good clothes and houses; to say to one slave, Do this, and to another, Do that, and to sit idle ourselves and be waited upon; and as to our tillage, or building, or planting, our forefathers did so and so, and were satisfied; and why should not we be the same? The English want us to use their ploughs, instead of our heavy wooden ones, and recommend other implements of husbandry than those we have been used to, but we like our old things best."

Mr. Nixon narrates an amusing modern story which shows that this spirit is still strong in the Transvaal Boer. "One of my companions in the coach," he says, "told me that a Boer came to his store at Kimberley with some bundles of tobacco for sale. The Boer had carefully weighed them over with some antique scales which had descended from some remote ancestor. The storekeeper reweighed the bundles, and finding the scales belonging to the Boer gave short weight, he suggested that they should take the store scales as the standard for computing the price, which was so much a pound. 'No,' said the Boer, 'these were my father's scales and he was a wise man and was never cheated, and I won't use anybody else's.' The storekeeper drily remarked that he did not press the matter, since he found himself a gainer by £12 in consequence of the Boer sticking to his scales."

Mr. Theal has given us an accurate and careful description of the domestic life of the Boers about the beginning of this century, part of which is worth quoting as a supplement to Sparrmann's picture.

"The amusements of the people were few. . .

Those who possessed numerous slaves usually had three or four of them trained to the use of the violin,—the blacks being peculiarly gifted with an ear for music, and easily learning to play by sound. They had thus the means at hand of amusing themselves with dancing, and of entertaining visitors with music. The branches of widely extended families were constantly exchanging visits with each other. A farmer would make his waggon ready regularly every year, when half the household or more would leave home, and spend a week or two with each relative, often being absent a couple of months. Birthday anniversaries of aged people were celebrated by the assembling of their descendants, frequently to the number of eighty or a hundred, at the residence of the patriarch, when a feast was prepared for their entertainment. These different reunions were naturally productive of great pleasure, and tended to cement the friendship and love of those who otherwise might seldom see each other. The life led by the people when at home was exceedingly tame. The mistress of the house, who moved about but little, issued orders to slaves or Hottentot females concerning the work of the household. If

the weather was chilly or damp, she rested her feet on a little box filled with live coals, while beside her stood a coffee kettle never empty. The head of the family usually inspected his flocks morning and evening, and passed the remainder of the day, like his helpmate, in the enjoyment of ease. When repose itself became wearisome, he mounted his horse, and, with an attendant to carry his gun, set off in pursuit of some of the wild animals with which the country then abounded. The children had few games, and though strong and healthy, were far from sprightly."

"As to their physical characteristics," says a traveller of the period of the Trek, "the Boers appeared to me . . . to be in general a tall and large-limbed race of men, but often with something heavy and ungainly in their movements, as if their joints were not compactly knit. . . In the district of George, more especially, I was much struck with the almost gigantic stature of many of the young men. The young women are often handsome. After the prime of life is past, both sexes are apt to become very corpulent."

It is a common reproach against the Boers that they are rude and uncivil to travellers, especially

to the English. Whilst there is undoubtedly some truth in this charge, one must bear in mind, first, that a great deal seems to depend on the attitude of the traveller, and secondly, that civility is comparative. There are so many tramps of the kind of Bonaparte Blenkins in South Africa that the Boer woman is apt to be as suspicious of a dubious-looking stranger as is the New England housewife, or the inhabitant of a villa on the Dover Road. But to an accredited traveller, or one who arrives in some state and proves to be amiable, they are hospitable enough. "The Cape Dutch," says Mr. Bunbury, "in general have a strong dislike to the English; yet I found them tolerably civil, even on my journey back from the frontier, when I was not in company with the Governor. They will not, however, put themselves out of their way for anybody, so that a traveller must conform to their habits and hours, and at whatever time he arrives at a house, he must wait for food till the customary meal-time of the family." This does not seem altogether unreasonable, especially when we read that the Boer usually refuses to accept any payment for his hospitality. In both these respects, as in some others, he is not unlike the Scottish

farmer. Livingstone, again, who had no cause to love the Boers, says: "The Boers of a lower grade, who live far from the centres of wealth and civilisation, . . . when not soured by the bad manners or villainy of English adventurers, are a body of industrious, well-meaning, and most hospitable peasantry. They are always civil, and decidedly more gentlemanly in their deportment than the English of the same grade who have settled among them." Mr. Gordon Cumming praises the politeness with which a decent Boer receives a trader or a sportsman, provided that the visitor is willing to go through all the handshaking and question-answering which are according to Boer ideas of etiquette.

The fact is that the Boers, as one of their own apologists has pointed out, are essentially peasants, and must be treated as such. It is ridiculous to compare their reception of an unexpected guest to that of the Indian Civil Servant or the great Australian squatter: though I never heard that either of these was more tolerant than the Boer of "tramps." If one remembers the descriptions which Mr. Stevenson and Balzac have given of the reception which the French peasant-proprietor

is apt to give to strangers of whom he knows nothing, one will admit, I think, that it would be difficult for the Boer to behave more brutally: and yet the French are by common consent the politest people in the world.

When we come to consider education, it has to be admitted that the average Boer is, like the average peasant of this country, frankly ignorant. This is not altogether his own fault. When the Boers left Cape Colony, no example of the need of education had been shown them. The state of public instruction at the Cape in 1837 was scandalous. "With the exception of the missionaries' schools (which were principally, if not entirely, designed for the instruction of the coloured races), and perhaps a very few others, the only teachers in most parts of the country were old discharged soldiers, generally very ill qualified for the office, in point either of intellectual acquirements or moral character. These men were in the habit of going about from one Boer's house to another, staying a month or two at each, to teach the children to read. In return for this service they were lodged and fed, and sometimes (by no means generally) received some trifling payment.

Even where there existed free schools nominally supported by the government, the teachers were miserably ill-paid, were often inefficient, sometimes of very indifferent character, and were regarded with great contempt by the farmers." At the same time, it must be said that the Cape Boers were not altogether devoid of education; most of them could read and write, and a huge family Bible was to be found in every house, however poor. When the Great Trek occurred, it found and left the emigrants at this stage of instruction. This fact accounts for much in their history that would otherwise be inexplicable: their disregard of foreign opinion, their confidence in their own superiority to all the world, their remarkable ideas of history and geography. There is every appearance of truth in the statement that they "trekked" steadily north in the hope of reaching Jerusalem, or at least of discovering the Garden of Eden and entering into the Promised Land. Their views on most subjects, except the Bible and farming, were equally simple. Mr. Nixon describes the surprise of a Boer on learning what a big city London was, and what a number of inhabitants it contained: "Why," he said in incredulity, "they will want a

couple of hundred sheep killed every day for their food!"

The Boer military organisation may fitly be described in this place. As in the Republics of Greece and in Elizabethan England, every man is a soldier when the need arises for him. "Every burgher or colonist between eighteen and sixty years of age can be called upon to serve on a *commando*. The whole country being divided into districts, and these districts being subdivided into wards, each of these wards elects a field-cornet, who has military duties when a commando is called out. The commandant is the officer who takes the chief command of the field-cornets." This system was first made necessary, in the early days of the Cape, by the presence of the natives, whose raids or risings might need to be repelled at any moment on any given spot. Thunberg noticed it a hundred and twenty years ago on the same footing that it holds to-day. As to the fighting qualities of the Boers, there is much to be said. On many occasions they have shown themselves as brave and determined as could be desired: at other times they have incurred grave suspicion of cowardice. The battles with Dingaan and the onset upon Majuba Hill would

have been creditable to any soldiers. But, if many witnesses are to be believed, the Boer prefers, if he can, to do his fighting without risking his skin.

Thus it was that Livingstone wrote on the subject: "The Boers have generally manifested a marked antipathy to anything but 'long-shot' warfare, and, sidling away in their emigrations towards the more effeminate Bechuanas, have left their quarrels with the Caffres to be settled by the English, and their wars to be paid for by English gold." In their forays they had two favourite methods of warfare: one was to drive a battalion of friendly natives or slaves in front of them, and to shoot down their enemies from behind the secure shelter of these advanced guards. The other, as employed against the Zulus of Dingaan, is thus described by Livingstone in an essay written about 1853, but not printed until after his death: "The Boers approach the Zulus to within 300 or 400 yards, then fire, and gallop off to a considerable distance and reload their guns; the Zulus pursuing have by this time come sufficiently near to receive another discharge from the Boers, who again retire as before. This process soon tires out the fleetest warriors, and except through the accident of the stumbling of a

horse, or its rider's drunkenness, no Boer ever stands a chance of falling into their hands. The Boers report of themselves that they behaved with great bravery on the occasion." In fact, they said that they had killed from 3,000 to 5,000 Zulus, with the loss to themselves of six—it still seems to be their favourite number. In a subsequent war with the Griquas, who, being the bastard children of the Boers, possess many of their peculiarities, the two opposing parties "kept at such ludicrous distances that the springboks quietly grazing on the plains between were frequently shot instead of the combatants."

Lastly, one cannot fail to touch upon the religion of the Boers, which forms so important a factor in their life and habits. The whole spirit of religious life in South Africa has always been intensely Protestant. "Left to itself," says Mr. Greswell, "Puritanism has seemed to harden and crystallise in the Veldt." The rustic seclusion of the Voertrekkers, too, rendered them singularly inclined to confine their study of the Bible to the Old Testament. This supplies the explanation o their union of strong religious feeling with extreme brutality to the natives, which has puzzled many

observers into branding the Boers with hypocrisy. Even Livingstone, who was an authority on the question, scarcely realised the state of the case so well as others have done. "Religion with many of them," he wrote of the Boers, "is a traditional sentiment—a system of theology or a class of emotions. The fact that admission into the Dutch Church is obtained by any one who can repeat the Catechism in schoolboy fashion has contributed largely to this unfortunate result. Hence, when they become connected with the Church they do not feel that they ought to carry out the truths of Christianity into actual life in their regenerating power." If, however, we stop to think over our home experience, it is quite clear that this is not sufficient reason for branding the Boers as a nation of hypocrites.

Mr. Theal says of the original settlers of 1652, who set apart a day of thanksgiving for God's goodness to them: "Where side by side with expressions of gratitude to the Creator are found schemes for robbing and enslaving natives, the genuineness of their religion may be questioned But two centuries and a quarter have rolled by since then, and men's minds have been greatly

enlightened during that period. In the seventeenth century the slave trade was not deemed a crime, and savages had practically no rights." That is still the mental attitude of the Boer. He has been described as "a mixture in religion of the old Israelite and the Scotch Covenanter," and there is much truth in the portrait. "From the French Refugees the colonists acquired a deep religious feeling, which, often misdirected, yet preserved even those furthest removed from places of worship from falling into barbarism. The cruelties inflicted upon the natives were always justified by quotations from the Old Testament. The Boer compared himself to the Israelite of old, and the native to a Canaanite whom it was doing God a service to destroy. In every household religious exercises were regularly observed every day, and it was no unusual circumstance for a farmer to make a journey occupying three or four weeks, for the purpose of attending Divine service. At the administration of the Communion ('Nachtmaal'), which took place every three months, there was always a large gathering of people from distant parts. Like the Jewish festivals of old, these seasons were made the occasions for holding

fairs, when sales by auction of land and cattle took place, and traders from Cape Town supplied the farmers with such goods as they needed."

The individual Boer, in short, has been well described as, "according to his lights, a citizen pioneer, and a rough, God-fearing, honest, homely, uneducated Philistine." His indubitable cruelty to the natives is perhaps the fault of his needs and upbringing, as his political shiftiness is that of the demagogues and adventurers who have too often meddled with his national affairs.

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDATION OF CAPE COLONY

IT has long been a matter of dispute amongst geographers whether the Cape of Good Hope was known to the ancient world. Herodotus assures us that a Phœnician expedition had circumnavigated Africa about two centuries before his day, sailing by King Necho's canal from the Nile to the Arabian Gulf, and thence, in three years, coming to the Pillars of Hercules (Gibraltar) and so back to Egypt. This account, however, is now gravely doubted by some authorities on the ground of its lack of verisimilar detail, whilst others accept it as a record of fact. The voyage of the Carthaginian Hanno, long miscalled his *Periplous*, or Circumnavigation, is universally accepted as a true story, but Hanno does not seem to have got further on his southward journey from the Mediterranean than the Senegambia, or thereabouts. One Eudoxus, in the second cen-

tury before Christ, is said to have found on the Æthiopian coast the figure-head of a vessel which appeared to have come from Gades in Spain—the modern Cadiz—but its crew had perished dumbly in their enterprise, as did Eudoxus himself when he attempted to retrace their course. Strabo, the greatest geographer of the ancient world, refused to believe any of these stories, and indeed laid down the doctrine that the Torrid Zone was impassable by man; whereby he may have contributed to delay the discovery of the Cape for some fifteen centuries. At the same time, the maps of the world as known to the ancients, in the latest French and German historical atlases, all show Africa somewhat in the shape so familiar to us, and thereby indicate, what is no doubt the fact, that the Dark Continent was generally believed by the ancients to terminate in a southern point, although practically nothing very definite was known about it.

The actual finding of the Cape, however, was left for the Epoch of the Great Discoveries at the end of the fifteenth century, when the spirit of exploration and adventure was in the air, and all stout sailors yearned, with Ulysses, to break

through the curtain that had for so many centuries overshadowed

> "That untravelled world, whose margin fades
> For ever and for ever, when we move."

It was the instigation of Prince Henry, the immortal Navigator, whose fifth centenary the world was lately engaged in celebrating, that sent the Portuguese captains out into the Atlantic to search for the southern secrets of the Dark Continent. For their behoof he obtained a Papal Bull "granting to the crown of Portugal sovereign authority over all the lands it might discover in the Atlantic, to India inclusive, with plenary indulgence to all who should die in these expeditions." Prince Henry died a generation before the goal was reached, but his spirit lived after him in the work that he had set on foot. In 1486, one Bartoloméo Diaz sailed from Lisbon with three little vessels: the largest did not exceed fifty tons. Voyaging ever southwards, far beyond the farthest point of the African coast yet known, Diaz came at last to the desolate inlet of Angra Pequena, since made famous by the German annexation of Namaqualand, where

"for the first time Christian men trod the soil of Africa south of the tropic." Still holding on his southward course, Diaz encountered heavy gales which blew him clean out of sight of land. When at length he was able to turn east again, no shore was to be found where it should have been expected. Diaz, in fact, had passed the Cape, and when he finally turned north and found the coast again, it was somewhere between Cape Agulhas—the Needles—and Algoa Bay. Still going on, Diaz came to the Great Fish River. There his crew felt that enough had been done for glory, and forced him to turn.

It was on the way home that the "hidden mighty head of land," as Camoens called it, was first seen. Diaz christened it the Cape of Tempests, *Cabo Tormentoso*, in honour of the quality that seamen recognise even to-day. But the King of Portugal thought this a name of ill-omen, and substituted that of the Cape of Good Hope, in allusion to the possibility of reaching India by the new route. Eleven years later the great Vasco da Gama fulfilled this hope, having named Natal on his journey to India in honour of its discovery being made on Christmas Day.

"The ocean highway to the rich lands of the East was now at last discovered." For a hundred years it was left to the sole use of the Portuguese, who only regarded the Cape as a half-way house to India, where water could be obtained and shelter found in stress of weather. Table Mountain took its name from them, but there ended their contribution to South African geography. The next act in the drama was inaugurated by the voyage of the English *Pelican* round the world. "We ran hard aboard the Cape," says Drake's log, "finding the report of the Portuguese to be mos false, who affirm that it is the most dangerous cape of the world, never without intolerable storms and present danger to travellers who come near the same. This Cape is a most stately thing, and the fairest cape we saw in the whole circumference of the earth." Ten years later Linschoten describes the innocent surprise of a Portuguese captain "that God the Lord caused them, who were good Christians and Catholics, with large and strong ships, always to pass the Cape with such great and violent tempests and damage, and the English, who were heretics and blasphemers, passed it so easily with small and weak ships." It is possible

that the superior seamanship of the English may have counterbalanced their heresy.

From the year 1591 onwards, English ships began to make Table Bay a regular port of call on the way to the East Indies. They set a good precedent by treating the natives with kindness, which had a far better effect than the cannon-shot which the Portuguese had been in the habit of administering. In 1595 the Dutch entered Table Bay for the first time, and the decay of the Portuguese supremacy in the East dates from the end of the century, and especially from the formation of the English East India Company in 1600 and of a similar Dutch Company in 1602. Both English and Dutch speedily perceived the immense value of the Cape as a permanent station, to which the Portuguese had never paid attention. It is worthy of note, by those who do not know it, that the first step towards colonisation was actually taken by Englishmen. In 1620 two captains of East Indiamen hoisted the English flag above Table Bay, and formally annexed the country around, for the reason, amongst others, that it was better that the Dutch, or any other nation whatsoever, should be subjects of the King of England, "than that

his subjects should be subject to them or to any other." But the home government disavowed their action; nearly two centuries were to pass before the flag of England should fly permanently at the Cape.

The Charter of the Netherlands East India Company is dated March 20th, 1602. That Company received the monopoly of trade with the East, so far as the United Provinces had a say in the matter, and was despotically governed by a Chamber of Seventeen Directors. It soon acquired most of the trade of China, Ceylon, Malaya, the Moluccas, Sumatra, and Java, much of which Holland still keeps under her flag, though Ceylon, like India, was destined to another master. For many years Table Bay was found a convenient port of call for fresh water and meat, whilst a rough and ready post-office was constructed out of marked stones and the trunks of hollow trees. But it was not until 1652 that the Company, incited by the reports of some shipwrecked sailors who had explored the land, sent out an expedition to take possession of the Cape and Table Bay. It was commanded by one Jan van Riebeek, formerly a surgeon in the Company's

service, "a little fiery-tempered, resolute man in the prime of life, with perfect health, unbounded energy, and untiring zeal." Dr. Jan—the name sounds familiar in our ears!—carried out his mission with entire success, and founded that Dutch rule at the Cape which continued without a break for nearly a century and a half, and finds its direct descendant in the modern State of the Transvaal.

The inhabitants whom Riebeek found settled at the Cape on his arrival were of two distinct races. The Hottentots, as the Dutch called the more advanced race, in an attempt to imitate the "jabbering" of those who called themselves by the prouder title of *Khoi-Khoin*, "Men of Men," occupied the best parts of the land, where they led the life of pastoral nomads. The Dutch, whose great need was cattle, speedily came into close relations with the Hottentots, with whom they freely mingled their blood, and so produced a half-breed race of slaves which will be referred to in the next chapter. The Hottentots possessed the woolly hair, flat nose, and thick lips of the negro, but differed from him in their yellowish-brown complexions, somewhat obliquely set eyes,

triangular-shaped faces and certain other marked physical characteristics. Their language was rendered unique by the strange and bewildering "clicks," which no European can pronounce. Besides these, there were the tiny wandering hunters known as Bushmen, whom anthropologists have pronounced to be the original stock of the Hottentot race, the true aborigines of South Africa, unchanged by crossing with those negroid races of the north which have so modified the less exclusive Hottentots. With the wild and timorous Bushmen the Dutch had little or no friendly traffic; but the Hottentots soon became a factor that cannot be omitted from any account of the ancestry of the Boers.

The original intention of the Dutch East India Company was to fortify the Cape solely as a half-way house to India, where the settled servants of the Company might trade with the natives for regular supplies of cattle and vegetables, and so victual all passing Dutch ships. But the natives proved unwilling to trade, and the Commandant was forced to let some of his men leave the service and turn farmers and stock-raisers. As the "free burghers," these were the first real

colonists of the Cape. In the course of the seventeenth century their number was greatly augmented, both by the freeing of more soldiers and sailors for work on the land, by the arrival of colonists from Holland, Germany, and France, and by their own rapid production of families with the aid of the complying Hottentot women or of the Dutch wives sent out from Amsterdam to that end. As their number increased, these farmers or "Boers" spread over the land, until in the year 1780 they had advanced to the Great Fish River, where they found themselves at last face to face with the Kaffirs, who were more warlike than the gentle Hottentots, and not so easily to be dispossessed of the soil. All this time, however, the colonisation of the Cape had been due rather to accident and the force of circumstances than to any intention on the part of Holland. In the eyes of the East India Company, the colonists were merely intruders to be tolerated, who were one and all liable to service under the Company if called upon. The "half-way house" theory of the Cape still prevailed.

In 1795 the Company's rule came to a sudden end. It is unlikely that it would, in any case,

have lasted much longer, in face of the growing hostility of the burghers, Boers, or farmers, who were then acquiring that deep distaste for a settled government which is one of the great secrets of their character and policy to-day. The convulsion of the French Revolution made itself felt half across the world, and the Cape was handed over to the temporary guardianship of England, as the only Power that could hold it from the opening clutches of greedy France. After a brief restoration to Holland during the peace which lasted from 1803 to 1806, the Cape was again taken over by us, and remained finally in our hands at the peace of 1814. With that date begins the true history of the Cape Colony. What we took over was "the forts, castle, and possessions of the Dutch East India Company at Cape Town, who had a kind of loose control over a few thousands of discontented Boers scattered over an immense range of country." The white population was then about 26,000 souls. It has increased more than twenty-fold in the eighty years of the British occupation.

The further history of the Cape Colony only concerns us at present in so far as it bears upon

the founding of the Transvaal State. In this relation, we notice that in 1799 the first English missionaries came out to the Cape to carry on the work which had already been begun by Schmidt, the apostle of the Hottentots, and, by insisting upon the rights of the black and the brown man to a place, in this world and the next, alongside the white, to intensify that "native question" upon which the Boer and the English Government at last parted company.

In 1815 a body of Boers, settled near the frontier of the Colony, broke out into open rebellion, the state in which the English had found them, indeed, in 1795, but which they had abandoned for twenty years in the hope that the new government would of its own accord remedy the grievances which they alleged. The change in the system of land-tenure and the new consideration given to Hottentot complaints against white men undeceived them. A certain Bezuidenhout, summoned to answer a charge of ill-treating a Hottentot servant, resisted, and was shot dead by soldiers attempting to arrest him. His friends and neighbours at once made preparations for a rising against the English, in which they unsuccessfully urged the strongest of

the Kaffir chiefs to join them. The insane attempt was put down, with the loss of one life on each side. Six of the rebels were sentenced to death for high treason: one, named Kruger, was let off with transportation, but the other five were executed in due course. "From that day order was maintained on the frontier," says Mr. Theal, "and to all outward appearance the farmers were loyal; but in their hearts they preserved the memory of this event, which to them appeared an act of cruelty and oppression, and which was one of the causes of that feeling of animosity towards the English Government which resulted in after years in their voluntary expatriation."

In 1819 there broke out the first of the wretched but inevitable Kaffir wars, part (like all our native wars in South Africa) of that process of securely settling white men upon land formerly owned by black ones, which we are accustomed to call the advance of civilisation. In 1820 the stream of British emigrants which always follows the flag began to become important.

In the meantime the English officials had been amusing themselves by drafting a constitution. The Dutch farmers received most of the boons they

wanted in the way of fair government and relief from injustice, and they were prepared to remember that after all they were the distant cousins of these English. But unfortunately the English legislators did not stop there. They actually ventured to fancy that the Hottentots and blacks had some civil rights; and the fat was at once in the fire, where it has been frizzling and flaming ever since.

In 1828 was passed the famous Fiftieth Ordinance, to which in reality the Transvaal owes its present existence as an independent Boer State. Up to this time, the position of the Hottentots had been wretched in the extreme. Vagrancy regulations promulgated in 1809, and based upon the Dutch system of the preceding century, had reduced the whole race to what was practically a condition of serfdom. In fact, during the first few years of the English occupation, legislative influence, as brought to bear on the natives, riveted their chains more tightly than before. "The Hottentot who preferred a charge of ill-usage against his or her master, did so on peril of being incarcerated with thieves or murderers for a week or a month (while the case was being tried), and of being flogged in addition, if the case should break down." Effect, indeed,

was given everywhere to that broad distinction made by the Boer mind between white and black, to the latter of whom, in all shades, neither civil nor religious rights of any sort were allowed, more than to the four-legged cattle who joined with them to make up the live-stock of the Colony. For a century and a half this view had been gaining strength, and it blazed out brightly in the first years of the English rule; but its extinction was near.

The missionaries deserve the chief honour of bringing about the change. To the consciousness of this is due the antipathy with which they were regarded by almost all the whites of the Cape two generations ago, and which still survives amongst the less enlightened Boers of the inland districts. Some of the obloquy thrown on the early missionaries, whose converts were accused of making fine words an excuse for laziness and vice, was probably deserved: what the Chinese call "rice Christians" must always occur in the early history of a mission. But the head and front of the missionaries' offending appears very differently to our modern eyes: they raised the price of labour by increasing the value which the natives set upon themselves and their ideas of the necessaries of

life. At the mission stations the Hottentot learnt for the first time that he was a man, and that he ought to "be'ayve as sich." "This was a lesson he could never forget, so that by those who were accustomed to the instant obedience and abject submission of slaves, the mission Hottentots soon came to be regarded as violent and rebellious." Consequently, every possible obstacle was put in the way of mission work by the farmers and the smaller officials at the Cape.

But there now lay an appeal to the public opinion of a great nation instead of the selfish oligarchy of the Dutch East India Company. The Rev. Dr. Philip took advantage of it by publishing a book which exposed the wrongs of the Hottentots, regarded as human beings. Fowell Buxton, Brougham, Mackintosh took up the question, and proposed to raise it in the House of Commons. The government at home and at the Cape determined to be beforehand with the Whigs, and the result was the passage, on July 17, 1828, of the Fiftieth Ordinance, which once and for all gave the Hottentots every civil right to which the European colonists laid claim. It long had to encounter violent opposition among the Boers; but no one

who is acquainted with its results and who holds modern ideas on these subjects will venture to disapprove of its aims or deny its efficiency.

The next great step taken for the amelioration of the condition of the natives was the emancipation of the slaves, which was ordained, throughout British dominions, by the passage of Mr. Fowell Buxton's Bill in August, 1833. This, together with certain attendant circumstances that will be mentioned in a later chapter, raised the indignation of many of the Boers to boiling-point. Then commenced the Great Trek which resulted in the foundation of the two Boer Republics of to-day. Whatever trouble we have had and may still meet in these States, Englishmen have the satisfaction of feeling that it is part of the price they have had to pay for their sincere and philanthropic attempt to make life easier and better for their native subjects in South Africa.

CHAPTER II

THE BOERS AND THEIR ANCESTORS

THE racial history of that part of the population of the Cape Colony which, in familiar parlance, we call the Boers deserves to be investigated, before one begins to tell the story of their separate existence in the Transvaal. It has already been stated that the name of Boer is simply a Dutch word akin to the German *bauer*, peasant. Our word *boor* has the same origin, but it has grown to denote certain qualities, found in many peasants, which do not necessarily exist in the Cape Boer, who is simply a peasant proprietor, farmer, or squatter.

The first notion of the essential Boer in the popular mind is, probably, that he is of pure Dutch descent, a belief which his language, a bastard and jejune Dutch *patois* known as "the Taal," helps to confirm. But this is by no means the whole truth. A Boer of the Transvaal, picked out at random,

may indeed, like Pretorius, trace his descent direct from the Netherlanders who fought at Haarlem and withstood the wrath of the Emperor Charles the Fifth. Or he may pride himself upon the fact that in his veins runs the blood of the French Protestants who fought at Moncontour, and followed the white plume of the most romantic of kings at Ivry. It is also quite possible, though he will not boast of the fact, that he has something more than a tinge of native blood. But it is mainly from Dutch and French elements that the Transvaal Boer derives his being.

The earliest European settlers at the Cape of Good Hope, as we have already seen, were servants of the Dutch East India Company. Van Riebeek's original followers consisted chiefly of soldiers and sailors, with a few artisans and gardeners. Two galleots which speedily followed him brought out fifty workmen and a clergyman, whose courageous wife, a month after landing, bore him the first European child that saw light in South Africa. At first, of course, the Dutch at the Cape were not settlers, but men holding a military post in the midst of unknown dangers, for whom there could be no question of marrying and giving in marriage.

Later on, however, most of them, as "free burghers," became the ancestors of the Boers of to-day, and it is of interest to know what kind of people they were. On this point there is no higher nor more impartial authority than Mr. Theal, who writes of them as follows:—

"The class of men introduced into South Africa in this manner was neither then nor at any subsequent period that of which a prosperous and independent community is formed. The sailors and soldiers of the Company were not such men as had followed gallant Barendz to the polar seas or heroic Heemskerk in his glorious career. The republic had barely sufficient of these to serve her at home, and had there been myriads of them, the Company's service was the last employment to which they would have devoted themselves. For that service,—in its lowest branches,—had acquired a most disreputable name in Europe. A scarcity of seamen had first caused the Company to make use of a set of wretches whom they termed agents, but who were known to every one else by the odious designation of kidnappers. These persons were constantly busy endeavouring to entice the unwary and vagabonds of all the countries of

Western Europe into the service of their employers. The Company paid them two months' wages in advance for each individual they ensnared, which amount was afterwards deducted from the pay of the victim. In this manner was gathered together a motley crew of spendthrifts, vagabonds, and simpletons, the very refuse of Europe. Yet among them were to be found men who had once moved in the higher circles of society, but who now, by their crimes or their misfortunes, were reduced to the general level of their associates. This system, once commenced, could not be changed. To keep in subjection a number of men like these, rendered desperate by the circumstances in which they were placed, a discipline so severe was necessary, and was carried out with much determination, that no good seaman or soldier would enter the service. Cause and effect were thus continually reacting on each other. It is not surprising that men, to free themselves from such a life, should be found willing to accept grants of land in South Africa . . . and it is still less surprising that in general they made very unruly and improvident citizens."

The original Dutch settlement at the Cape,

whose formation some modern writers have rashly compared to the arrival of the Pilgrim Fathers in America, was thus, it will be seen, of rather a different character. Indeed, an account of an early mutiny, in which four Englishmen, four Scots, and three Dutchmen were engaged, shows that the original servants of the Company were a motley crew. But language and religion are potent transforming influences. The Dutch language and the Dutch Reformed Church were alone authorised throughout the period of the Company's rule at the Cape, and thus the early racial differences soon disappeared in a common type which was, on the whole, more akin to the Dutch than to that of any other European nation.

In the year 1657 we find that the total number of Europeans at the Cape was one hundred and thirty-four, who consisted of "one hundred salaried servants of the Company, ten free burghers, six married women, twelve children, and six convicts." The "free burghers," of whom mention has been made in the preceding chapter, were discharged soldiers and sailors who engaged to remain in the country for ten years, and were then placed on farms which became their own property after three

years' cultivation. The Cape was still regarded merely as the "half-way house to India," and these free burghers' object was to raise cattle, corn, and vegetables for the garrison and for Dutch ships. But they were also the first true South African colonists, and so gave rise to an ultimate advance of the outposts of civilisation of which Van Riebeek and his masters never dreamed. And in this direction a most important step was taken when, in 1665, the heads of the Company selected a number of poor but respectable young Dutchwomen from the Orphan Asylum at Amsterdam, and sent them out in the capacity of farmers' wives. "By this means," says Mr. Theal, "a character of stability was stamped upon the settlement, which it lacked before. The sailor-farmers who received these young women in marriage now began to look upon South Africa as their home, and endeavoured to gather property about them for the sake of their families." Before that, the free burghers had been so little of a success that the Governor could find no better words for them than "lazy and worthless rogues." It is thus from 1665 that the history of the Boers really takes its origin.

Still the free burghers, even when "married and done for," left something to be desired. In 1685, a law had to be made for the expulsion of such of them as persisted in dissipated or irregular habits. Directly afterwards, a very important addition was made to the young colony in the shape of fifty respectable Dutch families, chiefly agriculturalists, but including a few mechanics, who were sent out and settled on farms in the Stellenbosch district. Forty-eight superior selected orphans were added, further to reform the morals of the free burghers.

So far, it will be seen that the genesis of the Cape Colony was more like that of New South Wales than that of New England. But in 1687 there was an addition made to it which not only helps to justify the mention of the Pilgrim Fathers, but quite probably originated all the best qualities of the modern Boer. This was the arrival of a body of those Huguenots whom the revocation of the Edict of Nantes had driven from their homes in France before the hoofs and broadswords of Louis XIV.'s dragoons. Ninety-seven families of these exiles, including about 300 men, women, and children, were sent by the East India Company to the Cape. They carried with them, amongst other

things, the blessings of wine and the Bible. Some had been of high rank in France: many were manufacturers: still more were vine-growers and gardeners, from whose arrival dates the manufacture of wine at the Cape on a large scale. Their language was speedily lost in the face of the Company's regulations enjoining the general use of Dutch, but their names and families have lasted to this day: Joubert, Dutoit, Villiers, are amongst the most notorious. They intermarried very freely with the Dutch, and it is said that almost every Boer to-day has some French blood in his veins.

Perhaps the most notable contribution of the Huguenots to the character of the Boer was that of an earnest religious feeling. We can hardly suppose that the earliest free burghers were much imbued with the ideas of the gospel, nor was religion a marked feature of Cape life up to 1687. But the Huguenots, having suffered for their religion, prized it as only martyrs can, and imparted their feelings to the other colonists. Even in the virgin veldt, the Voertrekkers are still wont to recall the sufferings of their Huguenot ancestors, and "Papist" is their strongest term of execration. Mr. Theal thinks, and probably with reason, that this earnestness of

religious feeling helped greatly in the colonisation of South Africa. The Boers, he admits, "through ignorance of every other book excepting the Bible," have come "to hold views repugnant in many respects to those of a progressive people," but it was their militant Old Testament religion which "enabled them to push their way singly into the interior, without schools or churches or shops, with only savages around them, yet without becoming savages themselves." It is this religion, too, which has impelled the Boers to treat the natives around them as Israel was directed to treat the Amalekites and Midianites: but that is a later story.

There is much interest to an ethnologist in the manner in which the Dutch has completely absorbed the French element, leaving no trace in the modern Boer of the vivacity, versatility, and dash which we associate with the Gallic nature, unless it be in the form of a certain political craftiness which is foreign to the phlegmatic Dutchman. Probably this is due in part to the climatic influences, which I have not room to discuss here, and in part to the deteriorating influences of slavery, which I shall discuss later on.

There is a third and, on the whole, less important

element in the Boer, which is often ignored, but on which a historian, even of the briefest kind, is bound to touch. This is the strain of native blood, as to which it is, for obvious reasons, difficult to obtain any trustworthy statistics. From a very early period, however, the soldiers of the Company began, as is the way of such, to make irregular alliances with Hottentot and slave women. This practice, as travellers bear witness, has continued, more or less, down to the present day ; as, indeed, it is bound to do in all countries where Europeans of the lower classes live on terms of friendship with uncivilised races. But it is peculiarly noticeable at the Cape, since two whole tribes, the Griquas and the Bastaards, have sprung from these irregular unions. Livingstone tells us that a bitter writer once taunted the highly moral Boers with "having produced a whole nation of bastards." But public morals were much looser two centuries ago than they are now, and it is quite possible to let bygones be bygones on this matter.

It seems, indeed, that the East India Company at one time encouraged the production of a half-breed race of colonists. In 1664 Eva, a Hottentot girl, who acted as interpreter, was married to a

Danish surgeon, "and the Company approved so highly of the match that they bore the expense of the bridal feast, presented the bride with fifty rix-dollars, and promoted the bridegroom on the day of his marriage." This was before the arrival of the Amsterdam orphans. Thunberg, the Swedish traveller of 1772, tells us that the example was followed in several cases. "There are a few families," he says, "have descended from Blacks, in the female line, for three generations back. The first generation proceeding from a European who is married to a tawny slave, that has been made free, remains tawny, but approaching to a white complexion ; but the children of the third generation, mixed with Europeans, become quite white, and are often remarkably beautiful."

But, as a rule, the unions between white and black, or rather tawny, as the Hottentots really are, were of a less regular nature than marriage. Many of the half-breed children simply remained slaves, and were reabsorbed into the race of their mothers. Some escaped to the veldt and gave rise to the Griqua and Bastaard nations, who led a nomadic life on the great plains south of the Orange River, and at the beginning of this century

were only raised above the Hottentots by the possession of the colonial Dutch language and the proud consciousness of a semi-European origin.

Others, again, were admitted into the ranks of the white community. Special provision for this was made by law. In 1671 it was decreed that half-breed children were to be instructed in Christian doctrines, and "particular care," said the regulation, "was to be taken that they were not alienated so as to remain in constant slavery, but that they might in due time enjoy the freedom to which, in the right of the father, they were born." In the course of a century, this humane ordinance was almost lost to sight. Sparrmann tells us that in 1775 half-breed children were left unbaptised as a matter of course, "nor, indeed, ever enquired after by the Christian ministers at the Cape, except in case that any one should present himself as the father, and make a point of his child's being baptised, and thus give the infant the right of inheritance." Half-breeds, the same traveller says, were not necessarily slighted in company of the Christian farmers, although signs were appearing of the scorn for "natives" which is nowadays so eminently characteristic of the Boer.

Lastly, one must not conclude this account of the native connection without at least mentioning the statement of Thunberg, who is generally a creditable witness on social matters. "The daughters of the colonists," he says, "are sometimes with child by their father's black slaves. In this case, in consideration of a round sum of money, a husband is generally provided for the girl, but the slave is sent away from that part of the country." There is nothing inherently improbable in this story, and I am not aware that it has ever been contradicted. Altogether, it seems that the possible percentage of black blood in the Boers is a factor that cannot be disregarded when one is attempting to portray their national character and origin. Yet here also the Dutch stock has manifested its superiority, and in regard to natives as well as Huguenots the Boers present a remarkable instance of atavism.

CHAPTER III

THE TRANSVAAL AND ITS NATIVES

SOME ingenious geographer has compared the physical structure of Africa to that of an inverted pie-dish. There is everywhere a great inland elevated plateau, girdled by mountains which slope outward and downward to the sea-coast. The Transvaal lies entirely upon this elevated plateau.

The name of the district originated in the fact that it was simply described as "the country north of the Vaal" at the time of the Great Trek, when it was almost unknown to Europeans. This is rather a loose term, and the Boers themselves thought it included Jerusalem. But in modern geography the name of Transvaal has been applied definitely to the territory of the South African Republic, which now covers an area somewhat smaller than France, lying between the Limpopo and Vaal Rivers, bounded on the east

by the great ranges of mountains, known as the Lobombo and the Drakenberg, which run parallel to the Natal coast, and on the west by the arbitrary frontier of British Bechuanaland, stretching away to the great Kalahari Desert.

The Limpopo or Crocodile River, so called by the natives from the abundance of these pleasing creatures in its waters, rises below Pretoria, and sweeps round in a wide semicircle of nearly 1,000 miles to the sea above Delagoa Bay. Unfortunately a large cataract prevents its being navigable beyond the point at which it leaves the Transvaal for Portuguese territory. The Vaal is a tributary of the great Orange River. It rises among the hills of the Drakenberg and flows to the west in a curved course, which serves as the boundary between the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

The district of the modern Transvaal varies in height from 2,000 to 8,000 feet above the sea. It is usually divided by physical geographers into three portions: the *Hooge Veldt*, or uplands of the south-east, comprising the Drakenberg highlands, "a region of about 35,000 square miles, from 4,000 to 8,000 feet above the sea, almost

everywhere abounding in rich auriferous deposits"; the *Banken Veldt* or terraced lands, a lovely pastoral and arable district of 18,000 to 20,000 square miles, between the Drakenberg and the outer slopes of the Lobombo range; and the *Bosch Veldt* or bush country, "comprising all the central and western parts, merging gradually in the dry steppe lands of Bechuana, a vast plateau over 3,000 feet above sea-level, and about 60,000 square miles in extent."

The *Hooge Veldt* is chiefly used by the Boers as grazing land, where they raise cattle and farm sheep. Its climate is dry and cold in winter, hot, though tempered by frequent thunderstorms, in summer, and nearly perfect in spring and autumn. "A brilliant, starlit night is then succeeded by a bright, sunny day, with a warm sun and a cool, bracing air." It is on these uplands that the gold-mining is all done. The *Bosch Veldt* has a hotter climate, and is largely infested by malarial fever and the dreaded tsetse fly, so fatal to almost all domesticated animals. It is covered with grass and trees, and only needs a better water supply to be "capable of growing almost every sub-tropical plant and cereal." The *Banken Veldt* partakes of

the nature of both the other kinds, and is chiefly known at present as furnishing admirable corn-land and grazing-ground.

Geologists are of opinion that the Transvaal, with its far-stretching plains, its rounded sandstone hills and its water-worn and terraced mountain ranges, was once the bed of a vast inland lake, such as sanguine engineers have dreamed of making in the Sahara. "The numerous fossil remains of aquatic life," says Mr. Keane, "together with extensive sandy tracts and much water-worn shingle, give to this great table-land the aspect of an elevated lacustrine basin, whose waters escaped partly through the Limpopo to the Indian Ocean, partly through the Vaal and Orange to the Atlantic." These two great fissures in the plateau still carry off most of the superfluous water of the Transvaal; the now famous Witwatersrand is the water-parting between their basins.

It is, of course, to its mineral resources that the Transvaal owes its fame in these latter days. Great coal-fields extend through almost the whole of the High Veldt. The first railway in the Transvaal was a short line from Johannesburg to

the nearest colliery. Formerly the Boers, when they needed fuel, took a cart to one of the numerous places where a stream cuts across an out-cropping seam of coal, and filled it with a pick and shovel. Gold, as everybody knows, is found in vast quantities in many parts of the same High Veldt, notably at Lydenburg, in the Kaap district round Barberton, and in the Witwatersrand district, centring in Johannesburg. This is so important a matter, being the key to Transvaal history for the last ten years, that I shall deal with it in a special chapter. No one seems at present to take much interest in any other metal. Thus, though silver, copper, and lead are said to occur in large quantities, no serious attempt has been made to work them. Cinnabar and tin are also said to be present, as well as iron, which, however, has not yet been found in quantities worth working. There seems to be very little doubt that many Boers would be unfeignedly glad if the same could be said of gold, although their treasury would not then be so full as it is.

Our knowledge of the Transvaal before the Boers entered it is chiefly based upon the ac-

counts of explorers in search of game, to whom its plains and bush-land afforded a veritable Hunter's Arcadia. Even the bloodthirsty Gordon Cumming grew poetical when he entered the Transvaal. "It was truly a fair and boundless prospect," he says of the view from a mountain near the border; "beautifully wooded plains and mountains stretched away on every side to an amazing distance, until the vision was lost among the faint blue outlines of the distant mountain ranges. Throughout all this country, and vast tracts beyond, I had the satisfaction to reflect that a never-ending succession of herds of every species of noble game which the hunter need desire pastured there in undisturbed security; and as I gazed I felt that it was all my own, and that I at length possessed the undisputed sway over a forest, in comparison with which the tame and herded narrow bounds of the wealthiest European sportsman sink into utter insignificance." The number of elephants and lesser game which Mr. Gordon Cumming bagged after this touching meditation fully bore out his hopes.

But the most interesting account of the Transvaal, before white men inhabited it, is to be found

in Captain William Cornwallis Harris's fascinating and valuable narrative of his expedition into the interior of South Africa in the years 1836 and 1837. He paints the new country in most lively and picturesque colours. At the very first sight he fell in love with it.

"Instead of the dreary waste over which we had lately passed, we might now imagine ourselves in an extensive park. A lawn, level as a billiard table, was everywhere spread with a soft carpet of luxuriant green grass, spangled with flowers, and shaded by spreading *mokaalas*—a large species of acacia which forms the favourite food of the Giraffe. The gaudy yellow blossoms with which these remarkable trees were covered, yielded an aromatic and overpowering perfume—while small troops of striped Quaggas, or wild asses, and of Brindled Gnoos . . . enlivened the scene." The Transvaal, indeed, was then remarkable for its abundance of undisturbed game, on which the Boers practised until they learned the sharp-shooting which has more than once served them so well in war.

"I turned off the road," says Captain Harris, "in pursuit of a troop of Brindled Gnoos, and

presently came upon another, which was followed by a third still larger—then by a vast herd of Zebras, and again by more Gnoos, with Sassaybys and Hartebeests, pouring down from every quarter, until the landscape literally presented the appearance of a moving mass of game." When this might be the hunter's daily experience, what marvel if he called the land where such things happened a Paradise of Sport? Captain Harris's testimony is not confined to the quantity of food for powder, as one more quotation will show.

"In the extensive and romantic valley of the Limpopo, which strongly contrasts with its own solitude, and with the arid lands which must be traversed to arrive within its limits, Dame Nature has doubtless been unusually lavish of her gifts. A bold mountain landscape is chequered by innumerable rivulets abounding in fish, and watering a soil rich in luxurious vegetation. Forests, producing timber of the finest growth, are tenanted by a multitude of birds, which, if not generally musical, are all gorgeously attired; and the meadows throughout are decked with blossoming geraniums, and with an endless profusion of the gayest flowers, fancifully distributed in almost

artificial *parterres.* Let the foreground of this picture, which is by no means extravagantly drawn, be filled in by the animal creation roaming in a state of undisturbed freedom, such as I have attempted to describe, and this hunter's paradise will surely not require to be coloured by the feelings of an enthusiastic sportsman to stand out in striking relief from amongst the loveliest spots in the universe."

Giraffes and elephants, the lion, the hippopotamus and the rhinoceros, covered the plains and filled the forests: it is no wonder that Captain Harris described the scene one day as like a Zoological Garden turned out to graze! Sixty years have brought about a mighty revolution in this respect. In natural beauty the Transvaal can still hold its own, where the hideous miner's batteries and the mean farm-houses have not blotted the landscape. But the country has undergone a transformation directly the contrary of that suffered by the courts "where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep," according to Omar Khayyam. "The lawyer and the financier," says a recent traveller, "thrive where in recent years the lion and the leopard fought for food, and townships have sprung up on spots

where living Boers have formerly shot big game." It has been suggested that this extinction of the former wealth of animal life will react upon the Boer himself, and that, "now no longer the mighty hunter, he will soon cease to be the matchless marksman as of old." That, perhaps, is worthy of consideration.

The district between the Limpopo and the Vaal Rivers was thickly inhabited, at the dawn of its history in the beginning of the present century, by tribes of the so-called Bechuanas, who still give a name to British Bechuanaland. These were a branch of the great Bantu family which fills Central and South-Eastern Africa, to which also belong the Basuto and the Zulus. The Bechuanas occupied the inlands, on the western side of the Drakenberg and Lobombo mountain ranges: the Basuto tribes held and still hold the impregnable strongholds of these hills, the Switzerland of South Africa; whilst the Zulus and their kindred occupied the coast slopes of the modern Zululand and Natal, from Delagoa Bay to the Great Fish River. Early travellers, who unscientifically lumped all these tribes together as Kaffirs, yet noticed their unmistakable difference from the

family of the Hottentots and Bushmen, which occupied the southern extremity of the Continent. The Bantu race, according to Mr. Keane, is "a Negroid—that is, a modified negro-race, in which the Hamites of North-East Africa constitute the modifying element." The Kaffirs, in fact, are not very distantly related to the Somalis; and thus we see that the Boers were not so grotesquely wrong as at first sight appears when they thought they had encountered the Egyptians in their search for the Promised Land of the North. There are striking differences in the individuals of the Bantu races, which bear witness to the mixture of types from which they have grown up. "Some have features of the lowest negro type; thick projecting lips, broad flat noses, and narrow receding foreheads; while others are almost Asiatic in appearance, with prominent and, in rare instances even aquiline noses, broad upright foreheads, and lips but little thicker than those of Europeans. Among the southern tribes these extremes may sometimes be noticed in the same village, but the great majority of the people are of a type higher than a mean between the two."

The Coast tribes, and notably the Zulu aris-

tocracy, have, perhaps owing in part to their environment, developed so as chiefly to excel in physical qualities and in warlike virtues. The Inland tribes of the Transvaal were less warlike and manly, but far more skilled in the arts of peace. The Mountain tribes, who scarcely appear in this history, were in all respects a middle term between the other two. "In comparing the Central and the Mountain with the Coast tribes when Europeans first came in contact with them the former are found to have attained a somewhat higher degree of perfection in such handicrafts as were practised by them all. Their government was less despotic, for matters of public importance were commonly submitted to the decision of a general assembly of the leading men. The males were found aiding the females in agriculture, though the hardest and most constant labour was by them also left to the women. Their habitations were vastly superior. The house of a Motshuana[1] had perpendicular walls, and consisted of a central circular room, with three or four apartments outside, each being a segment of a circle. It was surrounded with an enclosed courtyard, and was,

[1] *I.e.* An individual of the Bechuana tribes.

with the exception of being destitute of chimney or of window, as capacious and comfortable as the cottage of an ordinary European peasant. The hut of a native of the Coast region was a single circular room, covered by a low dome of thatched wickerwork, and no effort was made to secure the slightest privacy. Midway in convenience between these was the hut of a resident in the Mountain land. But with these exceptions, all comparisons between the tribes must be favourable to those of the Coast. The Bantu of the interior are smaller in stature and much less handsome in appearance than the splendidly formed men who live on the terraces between the Drakenberg and the sea. In all that is comprised in the word *manliness*, they are vastly inferior."

Beyond the fact that the Bechuanas of the Transvaal were very numerous in the first decades of the century, and lived a pastoral life, they have no history worth mentioning up to the incursion of Moselekatse, the event with which the real history of the Transvaal begins, about the year 1817. Before narrating this, I must return to the Coast tribes, and give a brief outline of Zulu history, which is necessary to the comprehension

of the dealings of the Boers with that courageous and powerful nation.

About the year 1793 a certain Dingiswayo, son of the chief of the Abatetwa, a Bantu tribe settled in modern Zululand, fell into suspicion of compassing his father's death, and had to flee for his life into the territory of the Cape. During the six years which he spent in exile, Dingiswayo, who was a man of singular genius, heard much about the European military system, and reflected on what he heard. When he returned home on his father's death in 1799, and recovered the headship of his tribe, he utilised his reflections to organise a highly disciplined army. Among his chief officers was a certain Chaka, born in 1783, who was heir to the chieftainship of the small Amazulu tribe, but had had to flee in much the same circumstances as Dingiswayo, with whom he took refuge. Dingiswayo raised him to a post of high command, and finally placed him in the vacant Zulu chieftainship. Chaka's bravery and military skill endeared him to the army. Thus, when Dingiswayo fell in battle, Chaka became chief of the two tribes, to which he gave the Zulu name. Then he proceeded to

improve his army into the most perfect military machine, perhaps, that was ever seen in an uncivilised country.

Strange stories are told of the unquestioning obedience which Chaka enjoined, under the fear and penalty of instant death. To tread out a roaring bush-fire, or to bring in a full-grown lion or elephant alive and unwounded, were the ordinary tasks set for a regiment on review days. Chaka, who has been variously called the Attila and the Napoleon of South Africa, soon ruled undisputed over the desolated regions of Natal and Zululand, where he carved himself out a real empire. In September, 1828, Chaka was assassinated by one of his brothers, who in turn speedily yielded life and empire to another brother, the ferocious Dingaan, of whose conflicts with the Boers we shall hear much later on. Finally Dingaan's power was broken by Pretorius, between 1838 and 1840; in the latter year he was assassinated by yet another brother of this happy family, the unwarlike Panda, who ruled peacefully until 1872. From 1856 to 1861, however, he was unable to prevent civil wars between the two most likely of his heirs, of whom Cetewayo was victorious in

1861. Until Panda's death Cetewayo was the practical chief, and thereafter he reigned without opposition until 1879, when the advance of civilisation rendered him an intolerably dangerous neighbour, and England, after the disaster of Isandhlwana, finally broke the Zulu power at Ulundi. Thereafter Zululand has been practically under English rule. A large slice of it was annexed by the "filibusters" of the Transvaal State in 1884, and the rest was formally declared a British protectorate in 1887.

It was an indirect consequence of the growth of the Zulu power under the formidable Chaka that the earliest emigrants across the Vaal River found, not the thickly populated and peaceful country of the Bechuanas on which the century had dawned, but a comparatively deserted land, guarded by the leonine Matabele chief who struck savage blows at them from the district where Pretoria and Johannesburg now stand. Moselekatse was one of Chaka's favourites; his leading skill and personal bravery had won him the hearts of the division of the Zulu army which he commanded, when, in 1817, he forfeited the King's favour by keeping for himself part of the booty in an ex-

pedition dispatched to extirpate a hostile tribe. Chaka sent an army with orders to slay Moselekatse, who persuaded his troops to follow him, and fled across the mountain-barrier into the territory of the modern Transvaal. Mr. Theal has well described the destruction and awe which he carried before his arms.

"The numerous tribes whose remnants form the Bapedi of our times looked with dismay upon the athletic forms of the Matabele, as they termed the invaders. They had never before seen discipline so perfect as that of these naked braves, or weapon so deadly as the Zulu stabbing spear. All who could not make their escape were exterminated, except the comeliest girls and some of the young men who were kept to carry burdens. These last were led to hope that by faithful service they might attain the position of soldiers, and from them Moselekatse filled up the gaps that occurred from time to time in his ranks. The country over which he marched was covered with skeletons, and literally no human beings were left in it, for his object was to place a great desert between Chaka and himself." It was upon the head waters of the Limpopo, a little south of the

modern Pretoria, that Moselekatse settled. Secure of safety, there he built his kraals, and proceeded to send out marauding expeditions north, south, and west, to gather in the spoil of the timorous and unwarlike Bechuanas.

Captain Harris, who has left us the most lively and complete account of Moselekatse and his kingdom, gives a graphic impression of the devastation of the country over which the Matabele hordes had swept. "We continued to advance to the northward," he says, for instance, "over extensive rugged tracts, strewed with numerous stone walls, once thronged by thousands, but now presenting no vestige of inhabitants. Wherever we turned, the hand of the Destroyer was apparent:

> The locusts' wasting swarm,
> Which mightiest nations dread,

is not more destructive to vegetation than he has been to the population of this section of South Africa. We frequently travelled for days without meeting a solitary human being, occasionally only falling in with the small and starving remnant of some pastoral tribe of Bechuana, that had been

plundered by Moselekatse's warriors." Whatever may be thought of the Boers' treatment of natives in general, it must be admitted that, in this instance at least, Moselekatse got from them no more than he gave.

CHAPTER IV

THE GREAT TREK AND ITS CAUSES

THE European colonisation of the Transvaal, like most other events of any moment, may be traced to what the doctors call a predisposing cause and an exciting cause. The predisposing cause was of twofold nature: on the one hand, there was the inherited and deep-rooted distaste of the Cape Boers for any kind of civil government which interfered with their entire liberty of action; on the other, closely intervolved with this, their long-formed habit of remedying any grievance, whether due to mankind or nature, by "trekking," or moving away from its neighbourhood. The exciting cause was the emancipation of slaves in the Cape Colony by the action of the English Government, and the failure of the Boers to obtain anything like what they considered fit compensation for an arbitrary and, in their eyes, indefensible act.

The dislike of the South African Boers for any

of those restraints upon personal liberty which are, even in these democratic days, inseparable from the idea of a settled government, may be traced back to the earliest years of the Dutch rule at the Cape. The spirit of lawlessness, which is still so manifest in the Transvaal Boer, as the half-dozen filibustering expeditions of the last ten years bear witness, was indeed imported from Holland and Germany, Scotland and France, by the original settlers, nearly all of whom had been in serious conflict with the law, either for crimes of their own or wrongs of their rulers. It was hardly to be supposed that the Huguenot who had fled with his bare life before the dragoons of Louis, the Dutch farmer who had heard from his parents of the cruel days of Alva and Philip II., or the prison-breaker who had fallen into the all-embracing net of the Company's kidnappers, should have any particular respect for law in itself.

And the early rule of the Dutch East India Company was of a kind to foster this spirit of opposition into tenfold vehemence. A severe discipline was needed to keep the good-for-nothing soldiers in order, and the officers of the Company were restrained by neither public opinion nor

private scruples from enforcing it to the utmost. One of the earliest entries in the records of the settlement tells how the starving men were encouraged to be cheerful; the punishment of the grumbler was swift and heavy, and one man received a hundred blows with the butt end of a musket for uttering maledictions upon the purser because he served out penguins instead of pork. Flogging and keelhauling were the punishments for the lightest offences against the regulations of the Governor. Very possibly no lighter hand could have controlled the "Pilgrim Fathers" of the earliest Dutch settlement.

Unfortunately, it never occurred to the officials of the Company, who were rather traders than statesmen, that sauce for the adventurous goose was not equally good sauce for the agricultural gander. When French religious refugees and independent Dutch farmers came out to the Cape, they were placed under the same severe and often vexatious discipline as the original servants of the Company. Far from being admitted to any voice in the affairs of the colony, they were made to feel that they existed upon sufferance, to grow food for the sailors engaged in the profitable East Indian

trade. Amongst the arbitrary regulations which vexed and harassed the Huguenots in especial was the prohibition of the use of their native language, not only in addressing the Government, but even in the service of their Church and the privacy of their fire-side. Other rules weighed upon all burghers alike. "The only chance a burgher had of making money and of improving his position was by selling the produce of the Cape, in the shape of vegetables, fresh meat, milk, and wine, to passing vessels, yet he was debarred from doing this with success by the vexatious rules of the Governor. He was also forbidden to roam far afield in the desert and Veldt. On all sides he was crushed, cabined, and confined."

Less important, but even more hard to bear, were the sumptuary laws which the Governor and his Council thought it necessary to promulgate in the eighteenth century. No one except the Governor was permitted to use a gilded coach, or one bearing a coat of arms; no one under the rank of a member of Council might put his coachman in livery; no one might carry a sunshade, save senior merchants and the wives or daughters of members of the public boards.

The way in which the officials carried out the rules of the Government—one can scarcely dignify them with the name of laws—was not less annoying to the colonists than the nature of the rules themselves. "Before the close of the seventeenth century," says Mr. Theal, "corruption in the administration of affairs had become widespread throughout the possessions of the East India Company. . . The majority of the higher officials were unscrupulous in their pursuit of wealth. . . Many officers used the power entrusted to them to make money in ways that were decidedly criminal." The evil arose, as in our own East India Company's service, from the system of paying very small salaries and winking at their being eked out by trade and presents. The consequence of it was that all through the eighteenth century the Cape settlers were continually sending home protests against the rapacious and unjust conduct of the officials. The evil must have been great, for even to protest was an offence punishable by imprisonment (which actually happened to a namesake of the famous President Pretorius), or by deportation to Batavia or Europe. The defence made by one Governor

was that the colonists had no rights as against the Government; they lived on sufferance, exactly as the colonists' descendants of to-day say that the Outlanders in the Transvaal do. The colonists were "a parcel of people who had been released from the Company's service, and permitted as an act of grace to live in the country, under condition that they could be ordered back into service at the will of the Government." It is highly interesting to compare this Governor's attitude with that of President Krüger to-day.

The result of all this was that, when England took possession of the Cape in 1795, a large number of the Dutch inhabitants were in open rebellion against the Company's rule, and looked upon England as a deliverer. Unfortunately the impatience of government which a hundred and fifty years of misrule had created was too deeply rooted in Boer nature to be soon extirpated: nor, as we shall see, did England take the best measures for attaching her new subjects to herself. Mr. Theal, however, thinks that "no people not of British descent ever presented such favourable material for the formation of a dependency loyal to Britain as did those South African colonists." It is true that,

in race, they came in great part "of that sturdy Nether Teuton stock which peopled England and Scotland as well as the delta of the Rhine." But it is not to be expected that a partial kinship which is already a thousand years old will outweigh considerations of modern comfort or profit, and two centuries of misgovernment, if they had alienated the Cape Boers from Holland, or at least from the Dutch East India Company, had prepared them to look with equal suspicion on all forms of government alike.

One remedy, when the tyranny of the Company's officials was at its worst, the Boers had always held in their own hands. This was the simple one of moving out of reach, as soon as the discomfort of staying within the borders of the colony grew greater than the trouble and danger of going forth amongst the savages to seek fresh woods and pastures new. In all ages this has been a recognised practice amongst pastoral peoples, whose wealth is all on four legs, and the Boers pointed to the case of Abraham and Lot as biblical warrant for their practice of "trekking," or "dragging" their goods and chattels, animate or inanimate, out of the reach of any danger that threatened them. The same

custom has been seen in all our colonies, but it is perhaps most remarkable at the Cape, where alone it has acquired the dignity of a special word to denote it. It is impossible to say when the first "trek" took place. Every writer on the Cape has noticed the practice, and has regarded it as one singularly characteristic of the Boer, who has scarcely any of that attachment to a particular spot of ground which so often marks our own yeomen. It is this habit of trekking to which is due almost all the northern extension of the Cape Colony.

"The Dutch colonists were not of a disposition to remain long quiet and stationary, or to rest contented with the limits of their possessions; they continued, as had been their wont, to move gradually onwards, according as they were tempted by the prospect of better pasturage for their cattle, or by other natural advantages, or merely by a roving disposition, till considerable numbers of them were established far beyond the acknowledged boundary of the colony. The colonial government, upon finding this to be the case, thought fit, without any regard to the rights of the natives, to alter and extend the boundary

so as to take in all the territory which had been occupied in this unauthorised manner by the roving Boers."

Mr. Gordon Cumming has left us a picturesque account of the nomad Boer, the Pioneer or *Voer-trekker*, who "lived in a small canvas tent pitched between his two waggons, round which his vast flocks of sheep assembled every evening, his cattle and horses running day and night in a neighbouring range of grassy hills." Thus he travelled with his wife and family, feeding on flesh, milk, and wild honey, until he came to a fountain that pleased him well enough for him to settle and build a house once more. The Bible was his sole literature, and he very likely steered by the map of the Garden of Eden which adorns the black-letter folios of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Many of the Voertrekkers were under the sincere impression that they would ultimately reach Jerusalem, and, a second Chosen People, establish a new Kingdom of God in the Holy Land. The Transvaal district of Nylstroom owes its name to this belief, for the trekkers who fell in with a river running north promptly hailed it as the Nile, whilst they saw Egyptians in the

Kaffirs, and too hastily identified Pharaoh himself with a certain chief called Palo.

This long habit of trekking must have added to the Cape farmer's inaptitude for regular government. "His 150 years in the desert converted the Boer, whether Dutch or French, into a keen and crafty pioneer, but an impatient member of an organised state." An apologist and official of the Boers, Mr. Aylward, puts the matter in a faithful light:—"One indelible feature has by their long and continuous wanderings been impressed upon their character—that is, an unsettled and vagrant disposition. Having been on 'trek' for forty-four years, the 'trek' has eaten itself into their hearts. They are still (1881) on 'trek'; and few, indeed, are there who are not ready at a moment's notice to hurl themselves once more into the desert in search of brighter and happier homes."

Mr. Froude, in his South African Journal, gives a highly characteristic instance of a modern trek, which deserves to be quoted as throwing some light upon the wish of the typical Boer for solitude and his unwillingness to lend himself to what most English farmers would consider a highly

desirable form of "progress." [The "Dutch farmer," or rather Boer, in question had an estate adjoining the Diamond Fields, which were originally in what was supposed to be Boer territory. "Had he remained where he was, he could have made a large fortune. Milk, butter, poultry, eggs, vegetables, fruit, ran up to fabulous prices. The market was his own, to demand what he pleased. But he was disgusted at the intrusion upon his solitude. The diggers worried him from morning to night demanding to buy, while he required his farm produce for his own family. He sold his land, in his impatience, for a tenth of what he might have got had he cared to wait and bargain, mounted his wife and children into his waggon and moved off into the wilderness. Which was the wiser man? the Dutch farmer or the Yankee Englishman who was laughing at him?] The only book that the Dutchman had ever read was the Bible, and he knew no better. The whole talk among these people is of diamond fields and gold fields, and diamonds and gold never made the material of a nation, and never will."

Of all the innumerable treks of the Boers, by far the most important was that, commonly called

the Great Trek, which gave rise to the South African Republic and the Orange Free State in the fourth and fifth decades of the present century. It may, on a small scale, be compared with the great "folk-wanderings" (as the Germans well call them) which gave rise to so many new states in Europe whilst the Roman Empire fell to pieces. Only there is this fundamental distinction, that it was not the incursion of barbarian tribes into a settled and civilised country, but the steady advance of civilised whites amongst a fierce and savage population of Kaffirs. It is somewhat difficult, in the midst of party feeling and conflicting authorities, to get at the exact truth about this event. On the one hand, we are told that the sole motive of the Boers was to pass the English boundary into a country where their harsh and demoralising treatment of their slaves would not be interfered with; on the other hand, the Boers themselves and their apologists look upon the Trek as the Exodus of "a poor persecuted people," seeking freedom only, and leaving English territory, like the Pilgrim Fathers, "for conscience' sake." Probably the real truth is somewhere between these two extremes, and I shall try to set

forth an outline of it, as it appears to me after a careful examination of the statements made on both sides.

Whatever may have been the various motives which prepared the Boers for the Great Trek, there is no dispute that the emancipation of all slaves by England was the match which set light to the accumulated magazine of explosives. For nearly two centuries, the Boers had grown more and more convinced of the right of the white man to do as seemed good in his eyes with the black and the brown. A glance at the history of the Cape slave system will illustrate this proposition.

At an early period in the Dutch occupation of the Cape was taken that most unfortunate step which has led to such constant trouble there, as it has also done in America. This was the adoption of a system of recognised slavery, on which, in spite of the examples of the ancient world, we moderns have never succeeded in making our civilisation flourish for long. In 1658 there arrived at the Cape 170 slaves from Angola, to whom were speedily added 126 from Guinea. "The introduction of this class of people," says the learned Mr. Theal, "was a grave political as well as moral

error. Its effects were soon apparent in fostering a feeling of pride among the Europeans, which made them despise manual labour of any kind. The development of the agricultural resources of the country was thus in fact retarded." More slaves were imported, and bred from: it was soon found convenient to extend the "domestic institution" to the Hottentots, especially to such as could be accused of overt or intended rebellion; and in 1834 the number of the slaves held in the colony had increased to thirty-five thousand.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century, and especially after the suppression of the slave trade in 1807, it became apparent that slavery was doomed in all the English dominions. The efforts of Macaulay, Wilberforce, and their friends made themselves vaguely felt on the other side of the Equator, and the Boers seem, on the whole, to have accepted the possibility of the gradual extinction of slavery with peace of mind. The colonial view may be supposed to be expressed in a letter of the Volksraad of the Natal emigrants:—"A long and sad experience has sufficiently convinced us of the injury, loss, and dearness of slave labour, so that neither slavery nor the slave trade will ever be

permitted among us." But every Boer in the colony was deeply convinced that, however great an evil slavery in general might be, the sudden liberation of his own slaves would be a far greater one. Selfish motives may have contributed to this view, but it was also based upon experience of what had been the effect of a sudden emancipation of slaves in the French West Indian colonies, and upon grave fears as to what course the liberated slaves would take, as well as a strong disinclination to bow to the decision of a distant and foreign Government on so vital a matter. Consequently, when Mr. Buxton's Bill became law in 1833, providing for the liberation of all slaves in the British dominions on December 1, 1834, but allowing their masters to retain them as "apprentices" for four years longer, it gave the signal for a widely spread move of the Boers across the frontier of the Cape Colony. Those who remained looked forward with the greatest terror to the fatal day of December 1, 1838, when they apprehended from the total release of 35,000 slaves "not only poverty to themselves personally, but a complete disruption of society, attended by riots and all the results of legalised vagrancy throughout the colony gener-

ally." They were signally in error: the emancipated slaves at once settled down to work, and have been a credit to the colony ever since. But by that time the Great Trek had taken place.

Fear of the consequences of a sudden emancipation of slaves and dislike to the principle were not, however, the only causes of the Great Trek. Some of the others are much less creditable to the English Government of the period. One of the main ones was disgust at the injustice with which the emancipation of the slaves was, so far as the Boers were concerned, turned into confiscation of their property. England, it is true, offered compensation. But this was calculated on the basis of the West Indies, where slaves were worth less than half as much as at the Cape. Thus, to begin with, every slave-holder lost three-fifths of the value of his slaves. Beyond this, the devotees of red tape had a finger in the pie. The compensation money was only payable on application in person at the Bank of England—a most iniquitous provision. "The slave-owners of the Cape had to pay discount and commission to the amount of 12 per cent. and upwards, in order to receive their share at Cape Town, and for this, many of them had to travel

five or six hundred miles. An English speculator, taking advantage of this state of things, went out to the Cape with a large sum of money, to buy up compensation claims, which many of the owners, disgusted with the trouble and loss they were exposed to, were willing to sell cheap; and it turned out, I believe," adds Mr. Bunbury, "a very profitable speculation." This is the kind of thing that so justly endears the Old Country to her distant colonies and dependencies.

A similar complaint was made by the farmers whose horses and cattle had been seized for the use of the British army during the Kaffir war of 1835. Full compensation had been promised; but the claims lay in the Government Offices at Cape Town until the claimants were weary of reiterating their requests, and it does not seem that anything was ever paid.

A further grievance of the colonists settled near the frontier was that the Government was quite unable to protect them from the forays of marauding Kaffirs and Bushmen; whilst, if they retaliated on their savage foes, they were liable to punishment. Across the border, they thought, the peril could be no greater, whilst their trusty

roers, or elephant guns, would at least be available for protection and reprisals.

The rock on which the Boers split off from England, we thus see, was simply that terrible stumbling-block, the Native Question.

CHAPTER V

BOERS AND NATIVES IN THE TRANSVAAL

THE great wave of emigration which thus began to roll northward across the Orange River about the year 1835 soon divided itself into three branches. Many of the first-comers settled down on the fertile plains of what is now the Orange Free State, between the Orange and the Vaal Rivers. Another branch turned to the north-east and poured over the passes of the Drakenberg or the Quathlamba Mountains into Natal, then a portion of the empire of the Zulu Dingaan, where, after bloody massacres and hotly contested battles, the genius and valour of Pretorius at last broke the Zulu power. A short-lived Republic of Natalia was then formed, but was soon put down by England, after a light skirmish, and its territory added to the Cape. Many of the Boers then turned to the north-west, where they joined with the late-comers and the most forward of the

Voertrekkers to found the several little states which coalesced later on into the South African Republic.

A contemporary traveller gives us an interesting picture of one of the earliest bodies of the emigrant Boers, which is worth quoting in order to show the kind of people they were.

"The Graham's Town Journal has lately (September, 1838) contained some interesting accounts of the emigrant Boers, by a man of the name of Boshof,[1] who has returned from a visit to them. He says that their number now amounts altogether to about 640 men, 3,200 women and children, and perhaps 1,260 blacks, with about 1,200 waggons; and that they calculate their live stock at 300,000 sheep, 40,000 head of cattle, and 3,000 horses (including mares and colts). . . If these accounts are to be depended on, the emigrants have established a regular system of government among themselves, vesting the supreme power, both legislative and executive, in a council of twenty-four members elected for one year by 'the people,'—I presume by the majority of their

[1] Perhaps this was the future President of the Orange Free State.

number. They have also appointed magistrates for the trial of petty offences, and a court of justice for more serious cases; and it is stated that they pay much attention to public worship and religious instruction. But they feel severely the want of some one qualified to take a decided lead, and to acquire the confidence and respect of all. One statement made by Boshof is so unexpected that I will extract it word for word. He says:—'There are not a few slave apprentices with the emigrants; but it has been determined by the council that these shall be set at liberty on the 1st of December, the same as in the colony. The emigrants do not seem to have the slightest idea of entering into any slave trade whatever, and are even offended at a question on the subject being put to them. They say, "We are not averse to the emancipation of the slave—the colonists never introduced the slave trade, the European Governments forced it upon us,—what we complain of is, that our slaves have been emancipated by England under a promise of full compensation, whereas we have scarcely received a third of their value."'"

This is undoubtedly a plausible utterance, and

would command our respect, if we did not check it by the future history of the South African Republic, in which both slavery and the slave trade flourished under the faintest disguise. Livingstone refers to this declaration as being made, like the fine-sounding proclamation against slavery set forth by President Pretorius, himself a slave-holder, in 1860, solely to throw dust in the eyes of the European Governments. It may be that it was made in good faith and that circumstances forced the Boers to abandon its doctrine, like that so distinctly set forth by the Natal Volksraad. But it is quite certain that, whether of design or not, it was entirely misleading as to the action of the Emigrant Farmers. Their idea of emancipating their slaves was to free them, as "slaves," with one hand, and take them back, as "apprentices," with the other.

The view of the authorities of the time as to the trek was very undecided, and of a piece with the vacillating conduct which England has always displayed towards the Boers, who are, unfortunately, not sufficiently educated to comprehend that vacillation or mildness in the conduct of a State can arise from any other cause than weakness.

The emigrants themselves, mindful of the old law of the East India Company which strictly forbade any colonist to cross the frontier without a written permission from the authorities,[1] hardly expected to be allowed to go peaceably. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Cape, Captain Stockenstrom, however, publicly declared that "he knew of no law to prevent the inhabitants from crossing the boundary, and if there were such a law, it was arbitrary and tyrannical." This declaration had a great effect in encouraging the movement, which soon became, as many observers have agreed, "a perfect passion," infecting even the long-settled districts about Cape Town. The Governor attempted, without avail, to check the tide of emigration by the issue of a Proclamation, in which he earnestly exhorted "all Public Functionaries throughout the Colony, as well as all ministers of religion, and other persons of sound views, who cannot but foresee the inevitable result of the prevailing mania of emigration, to endeavour by every means in their power to dissuade intend-

[1] "So anxious were the authorities to prevent the settlers from leaving the lands assigned to them, that edicts were frequently issued forbidding them to 'trek' under pain of death and confiscation of their property."—A. H. KEANE.

ing emigrants from the prosecution of plans which cannot fail, sooner or later, to involve themselves, and their families who are prepared to accompany them, in certain and irretrievable ruin."

The fate of the earliest party of emigrants was such as fully to bear out the Governor's words, which were, indeed, a prophecy after the fact. The northern boundary of the Colony at this time was the Orange River. The first body of emigrants, numbering about thirty families, and headed by one Carl Triechard, crossed the frontier towards the close of 1835. The coast was then overrun by the fierce warriors of Dingaan, and the interior plateau rendered scarcely less insecure by the predatory bands of the "Old Lion" Moselekatse. Triechard therefore held a middle course right along the mountains to Delagoa Bay, where many of his followers died of fever, and the rest, two only excepted, were slain by a war-party of the Matabele. The second body advanced, about two hundred strong, under the famous Commandant Hendrik Potgieter. Ignorant of the fate of their predecessors, they kept more inland, and their advance guard was caught unawares by a body of Moselekatse's warriors: twenty-five were

slain, but a few escaped to warn the main body. The Boers had time to form their waggons into a circular *laager*, lashing them together with *riems* (hide ropes), and filling the interstices with thorn bushes. The Matabele, who were five thousand strong, failed to capture it, lost 150 men in a quarter of an hour, and made off from such hot company with all the emigrants' live stock, said to be 6,000 cattle and 41,000 sheep.

It was quite clear to the Boers by this time that, unless Moselekatse's strength was broken, the emigrants could hope for no peace. Potgieter returned to meet several other bands, to whom he explained the facts. It was decided that they should endeavour to do as they had been done by; and, in fact, they bettered the instruction. A "commando" was at once formed and marched under one Gert Maritz in January, 1837. The skill of its leader, long trained in Border warfare, and the zeal of some friendly natives, executed a somewhat savage plan to perfection. The force took one of Moselekatse's chief military stations by surprise, and covered it with a rain of bullets from a commanding and impregnable position. Four hundred Matabele warriors were slain and

7,000 cattle recovered, without a single wound on the part of the Boers. Moselekatse was not himself present, but the Boers were well aware that he also would thirst for revenge, and they resolved to strike another crushing blow before he was prepared. Its story may here be told in the words of Mr. Theal, who may be trusted not to be prejudiced against the Boers.

"A large commando, of which Maritz was elected commandant, assembled and marched fearlessly into the old lion's den. In conducting operations against their savage enemies, the Emigrants were not troubled with any qualms of conscience, but sought only how to subjugate them most thoroughly. In common conversation, they constantly compared themselves to the Israelites fleeing from Egypt, and their foes to Canaanites, whom it was not less their duty than their interest to subdue. They shot them down with as little compunction as if they had been so many wolves. Three days Moselekatse stood at bay, putting forth his strength in vain against those terrible horsemen, who were so fearfully avenging the Christian blood he had shed. Then, crippled and bleeding, he gathered his forces together and

fled. But the pursuers were close behind, panting still for further vengeance. At the Little Marico River he made his last stand, and there sustained a defeat that utterly broke his power. The Lion of the North was now driven, like a timid antelope, far beyond the Limpopo, to a tract of country near the Zambesi, from which he never returned."

It is hardly necessary to remind the modern reader that Moselekatse there founded the kingdom of Matabeleland, and that his son and successor was the famous Lobengula, who has also lately fallen before the avengers of Christian blood, or the pioneers of civilisation, as they would probably prefer to be called.

This was the last fight in which the emigrants in the Transvaal had to defend their existence. The numerous native wars that followed, up to the time of Sekukuni, were undertaken rather for the purpose of maintaining order and obtaining "apprentices."

Perhaps it will be well, before carrying on the history of the Transvaal, to consider the much-discussed attitude of the Boers upon the Native Question. Travellers seem never to have settled

whether the Transvaal was or was not a slave-holding state. The Fenian Boer Aylward emphasised Mr. Froude's assertion "that the white people were much more in the position of slaves to the Kaffirs than the blacks were to them." Livingstone roundly accused the Boers of "carrying on the slave-trade." Which was right?

After the destruction of the power of Moselekatse, the Bechuana tribes that were freed from his yoke were disposed to welcome the white men. But they soon found that things were not, from their point of view, greatly improved. The Boers, according to their neighbour, David Livingstone, "came with the prestige of white men and deliverers; but the Bechuanas soon found, as they expressed it, 'that Moselekatse was cruel to his enemies, and kind to those he conquered; but the Boers destroyed their enemies, and made slaves of their friends.' The tribes who still retain the semblance of independence are forced to perform all the labour of the fields, such as manuring the land, weeding, reaping, building, making dams and canals, and at the same time to support themselves. I have myself been an eye-witness of Boers coming to a village, and, according to their

usual custom, demanding twenty or thirty women to weed their gardens, and have seen these women proceed to the scene of unrequited toil, carrying their own food on their heads, their children on their backs, and instruments of labour on their shoulders."

This is rather a curious commentary on the assertion of the emigrants that they had abandoned slavery in theory as well as in practice. But the Boers had an ingenious device by means of which they cheerfully signed any number of declarations against slavery and at the same time had the full advantage of it. This was the "apprentice" system, which flourished unchecked until the time of the British occupation of the Transvaal. It was simply slavery under a different name, and so supposed to smell sweeter in English nostrils.

But even so, the natives of the Transvaal, whom, according to Mr. Krieger, the Boers were justified in making work for them, in consideration of permission to live in their country—these serfs and villeins could not supply the demand for domestic service. That was met by forays on outlying tribes, which had a good supply of cattle. A double purpose was thus served by the raid.

"Those individual Boers who would not engage in it for the sake of slaves can seldom resist the two-fold plea of a well-told story of an intended uprising of the devoted tribe, and the prospect of handsome pay in the division of the captured cattle besides." Those of less tender consciences took the children as "apprentices," who were brought up to perform all the duties of the emancipated slaves.

Livingstone himself, as it has been seen, could not understand how the Boers could reconcile their practice of slave-raiding with their profession of Christianity. To his amazement, as he wrote to a friend at home, "their Church is, and has always been, the great bulwark of slavery, cattle-lifting, and Caffre-marauding." If he had had more opportunities of studying the Boers at close quarters, perhaps it would not have seemed so wonderful.

We have already seen how the education of the emigrant farmers was practically limited to the Bible. "That was the one sole volume from which all the history, the geography, and the science known to the generation that grew up in the wandering was derived. And the simple language

of the Old Testament, much of it applying to a people leading a similar life to their own, wandering in a wilderness, depending upon flocks and herds, fighting with heathen tribes for existence, had a meaning for them which it cannot have for dwellers in the towns of Europe. The very skies and the landscapes, the animals and the plants, of the ancient Scriptures were the same that they were familiar with in daily life. Thus they came to regard themselves as God's peculiar people." They were as stiffnecked as the Israelites could possibly have been, and they believed that the natives whom they encountered were Canaanites, to be destroyed, or Gibeonites, to be enslaved. Even to-day, the Boers are said to look on the Kaffirs as the descendants of Cain, and consider any attempt to Christianise them as trying to nullify God's curse. Missionaries are asked, in all seriousness, why they waste time in preaching to the Kaffirs, who, as every Boer knows, have no souls. "A friendly Boer once speaking to an acquaintance about Matabeleland, assured him it was a beautiful country, and would one day be taken over by the Boers, adding, seriously, 'God Almighty never made such a beautiful country for Kaffirs!'"

It is easy now to see how the Boer believes that the natives have no rights, and how even his religion prevents him from using any of the rules of ordinary justice or truth, not to speak of mercy, towards his "poor relations." "Placed in a black man's country, he feels somehow that the distinction between himself and the aborigines is a real one, and the constitution of his State is drawn up with distinct reference to this demarcation." A cynic, remembering the dash of the tarbrush in the Boer's own genealogy, might see in this feeling something of the haste of the *parvenu* to tread down all his old associates, and to forget the pit whence he was digged. However that may be, it is certain that the Boer denies all rights to the natives. If he promises to give them some, in deference to the absurd English ideas, it is with a mental reservation that, if he may not enslave them, he will make them permanent apprentices; and it is not easy for the Englishman to perceive the difference. Thus one of the chief causes of the Great Trek was the Boer's determination to reach a country in which he might pursue, without molestation, the "proper treatment of the blacks"; "it is almost needless to add," says Livingstone, "that the

'proper treatment' has always contained in it the essential element of slavery, namely, compulsory unpaid labour."

This state of the national mind, in fact, derived as it was from the original Dutch one, was "founded on views like those prevalent in England in Queen Anne's time, or in the Southern States of America before the late war. It regards the native races as helots and serfs, to be humanely treated, but not by nature capable of being placed on any sort of practical equality with the white races."

The Boer native policy, according to Sir Bartle Frere, was very simple. "To have no more natives than are wanted to work on their farms, and to keep those few in a very complete state of subordination, are, of course, cardinal points. Large, powerful, and growing (races of) natives like the Zulus alongside us are stubborn facts, and a great difficulty to the general run of Dutch Transvaal politicians; but they have a hazy notion that such people ought to be, and may be, driven away somewhere else, into unhealthy regions north of the Portuguese, or pent up in black Alsatias, where they may grow mealies, but cannot keep horses or sheep."

Natives who attacked the Boers, or who might be expected to do so, were not likely to get any mercy from the holders of this doctrine, as long as the Boers were in the better position. And we find them, accordingly, shot down like wolves, blown up with dynamite, starved in the caves where they took refuge. In all this melancholy tale of murder and outrage, of slave-raiding and cattle-stealing and land-grabbing, which is the history of the Boers and the natives in South Africa, there is yet no reason to suppose that any Boer felt more conscientious scruples than did Mr. Gordon Cumming or Captain Harris when they shot the quaggas and giraffes, the lions and leopards of the Veldt. "There can be no doubt," says Mr. Theal, "that Pretorius thought he was acting in accordance with divine command in treating the natives as he did. The injunctions given in the twentieth chapter of Deuteronomy were therefore followed to the letter:—"When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. And if it will make no

peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: and when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: but the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee."

For "city" read "tribe," and this barbarous exhortation will amply and exactly express the policy which the Boers have employed for half a century towards the tribes with which they have come into contact. All their native neighbours have to bewail, like Mankoroane, the theft of cattle, or, like Khama, the plunder of subjects, or, like a hundred nameless ones, the robbery of land. Only within the last few years has the extension of the *pax Britannica* made it remotely possible for any native chief within reach of the Transvaal to keep anything that was his, save occasionally in virtue of his own strong hand.

It was in the course of one of these slave-raids that the Boers came into their well-known collision with Dr. Livingstone. That famous

attack upon Sechelé and his subjects was amply avenged in the justly indignant pages of the explorer's journal, which thrilled all England when it was published. Livingstone's hatred of the Boers' slave-raids was all the more noticeable because of his sympathy with the emigrants in other respects.

"It would be hardly possible to find a man, not born in South Africa, more closely resembling a Boer in character than Dr. Livingstone. He had all the indomitable perseverance, the disregard of difficulties, the coolness in time of peril, the hatred of restraint of any kind, which characterised the Emigrants. But he had been educated in the school of modern English ideas, and consequently he and the farmers bore little love to each other."

More than once the Boers warned Livingstone, who was settled in Bechuanaland near the border of the newly settled Transvaal, that his plan of educating the insolent natives would not be permitted. Finally these culminated in the infamous raid on his station at Kolobeng. There can be no doubt that Pretorius had ordered his commando of Boers, in the course of their raid, four hundred strong, on the Bechuanas, to kill

Livingstone if they could lay hands upon him. A happy accident—he called it an interposition of Providence—delayed him for a fortnight on his way back from the Cape, and the Boers could only content themselves with looting his house. This they did most thoroughly. "They brought four waggons down," wrote Livingstone to his wife, who was happily in England, "and took away sofa, bed, table, all the crockery, your desk, smashed all the wooden chairs, took away the iron ones, tore out the leaves of all the books and scattered them in front of the house, smashed the bottles containing medicines, windows, oven-door, took away the smith's bellows, anvil, all the tools —in fact, everything worth taking: three corn-mills, a bag of coffee, for which I paid £6, and lots of coffee, tea, and sugar which the gentlemen who went to the north left; took all our cattle and Paul's and Mebalwe's. Then they went up to Limaüe, went to church morning and afternoon, and heard Mebalwe preach!" "Think," he writes to a friend, "think of a big, fat Boeress drinking coffee out of my kettle, and then throwing her tallowy corporeity on my sofa, or keeping her needles in my wife's writing-desk! Ugh! And

then think of foolish John Bull paying so many thousands a year for the suppression of the slave-trade, and allowing Commissioner Aven to make treaties with Boers who carry on the slave-trade!" One is not altogether displeased to know that this time the Boers gained a very doubtful victory: the Bechuanas fought bravely, and killed thirty-five of the assailants, with a loss of sixty to themselves.

At the same time, it must be remembered that this story is not absolutely proved. The statement of the Commandant of the Boers was that Livingstone's house had been pillaged before his commando arrived at Kolobeng. On the other hand, even Mr. Theal allows that the burghers regarded Livingstone as a very dangerous enemy, and that the story is not in itself improbable. And the Commandant himself admitted that he had broken open Livingstone's workshop, and, on finding guns under repair in it, had confiscated and removed the whole of the loose property upon the place. He also seized some 300 women and children of Sechelé's people, the greater part of whom were divided among the members of the commando as slaves—I beg the Boers' pardon,—as apprentices.

CHAPTER VI

THE FORMATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

I. *The Boers in Natal*

THE body of Boer emigrants who had entered Natal came nearest to destruction of all. In 1838 Pieter Retief, with sixty-six farmers, was treacherously murdered by the Zulu Dingaan, who then fell upon the rest of the emigrants and slew over 300 white men, women, and children at a place that still bears the melancholy name of Weenen, or Weeping. Some of the survivors thought of retreat, but the stern religion and the courageous women of the emigrants alike advised a bolder course. An expedition was sent against the Zulus, which was drawn into an ambush and had to retreat tumultuously in disorder. All seemed lost, when occasion brought out the high

qualities of the remarkable man to whom the Transvaal State may be said to owe its very existence.

Andries Wilhelmus Jacobus Pretorius, a farmer from the district of Graaff-Reinet, came to the front just when a leader was needed. He was then thirty-nine years of age, endowed with vigour and strength of body uncommon even amongst the athletic and often gigantic Boers, and in appearance "a calm, unexcitable, plainly dressed farmer, unassuming in manner, slow in counsel, but quick in action." He already possessed wealth and reputation. "His family traced its descent through many generations to Johannes Pretorius, son of a clergyman at Goeree, in South Holland, who arrived at Cape Town in the early days of settlement; and they prided themselves upon having preserved an unstained reputation for integrity during that long period." Like the rest of the Boers, "he had received so little education as to have no knowledge of geography, modern history, or the condition and relative strength of European nations; but in Bible history he was thoroughly well versed. It was because he was a model of piety, according to the ideas of the farmers, and

an embodiment of their ruling passions,—hatred of control and of sudden innovations, love of freedom and of abundant space to move about in,—as well as on account of his ability and bravery, that Pretorius came to be the hero of the Emigrants." He has been called the Boer Cromwell, and those who wish to find the key to his character, as well as to that of the typical Boer, must read the letter which he wrote from his deathbed to the Council of War, couched in the biblical phraseology which seems as strange to us across the ocean as it does across the centuries in the case of Cromwell. There is no reason to doubt that Pretorius was a sincerely good man: and, after his lights and opportunities, he certainly was a great one.

His first action, when called to command, was to finish the war with Dingaan by a series of swift and crushing blows which led to that chief's dethronement and assassination after his defeat. A Republic was then formed in Natal, which had a peaceful existence for a year or two, until native complications caused the Governor of the Cape to interfere. The Boers refused to yield to English authority, and for the first time came into conflict with " the red-coats."

The history of the circumstances is long, intricate, and not very relevant to the present matter. It is noteworthy that the emigrants were still expressly described by the Governor of Cape Colony as British subjects, although they had most distinctly asserted that they laid down their allegiance when they crossed the frontier. Their incursion into the neighbourhood of Port Natal had called the Government's attention to the value of that place as a colonial possession, it being one of the two or three good harbours of the South African coast. Accordingly Sir George Napier sent troops to occupy it, which was a sufficiently statesmanlike proceeding. But he did not face the problem of how to deal with the emigrant Boers. They were British subjects, he repeated; but the Government could afford them neither rule nor protection from the natives. Let them lay down their arms and give up their ammunition, and Dingaan would be formally instructed not to attack them. This was hardly sufficient guarantee for men who had seen Weenen and the Hill of Blood covered with the skeletons of their massacred companions. The Boers, under the able guidance of Pretorius, refused to obey

and Sir George Napier informed his representative that it would be inexpedient to press the matter.

The farmers founded the town of Pietermaritzburg, and the new state of Natalia seemed fairly established. Port Natal remained in the hands of the English garrison, but no attempt was made to interfere with the Boer government in the rest of the territory, which was bounded by the Drakenberg, the sea, the Tugela and the Umzimubu Rivers. The Zulu power was completely crushed, and the foundation of the new Republic was blackened by one shameful deed, which can only be explained by the Boer theory that natives had neither souls nor rights, and that faith pledged to them was to be kept so long as it profited, and no longer. This was the execution in cold blood of Dingaan's envoys for peace, in which Mr. Pretorius and the Zulu Panda took an equal share.

The government of the new Republic has been authoritatively described as "utter anarchy." It speaks well for the character of the emigrants that they were not completely demoralised by the absence of all real restraint save public opinion. Pretorius was Commandant-General in Natal, Potgieter Chief Commandant in the western dis-

tricts; a Volksraad of twenty-four members was the supreme legislative power; but there was no stability in its acts. In moments of difficulty Pretorius and Potgieter were invested with the practical, if not the nominal authority of dictators; at other times every man did what seemed right in his own eyes.

It showed the good sense of the emigrants that they founded their first republic within touch of the sea, and therefore of future civilisation. Natalia was their main settlement; but attached to it by the slender political tie of an "Adjunct Raad" were two smaller settlements on the western, or inland side of the Drakenberg, one south and one north of the Vaal River, which were the germs of the modern Orange Free State and South African Republic.

Towards the end of 1840, the Natal Volksraad entered into negotiations with the Cape Government, with the view of getting their independence recognised. The Governor was inclined to take possession of their territory and establish a strong government in it, to ward off the native troubles that he otherwise foresaw. But his hands were tied, for the Ministry at home had already adopted

the plan, so fruitful in mischief through the middle third of the century, of refusing to increase England's responsibility in South Africa. In January, 1841, the Volksraad formulated their demands in a letter whose terms are interesting as showing with what the Boers would then have been contented.

They were "willing and desirous to enter into a perpetual alliance with the Government of Her Majesty," on the following conditions, amongst others:

The Republic was to be acknowledged as a free and independent State, in closest alliance with the British Government. If the Republic were attacked by any other Power by sea, Great Britain might interpose, either by negotiation or arms. If Great Britain were at war, the Republic would be neutral. Customs were to be settled as for an English colony, with the exception of "wines, strong liquors, and other articles prejudicial to this Republic." British subjects residing in the Republic should have equal protection and no higher taxes than the burghers. In case of war, the Republic would give every assistance to a Colonial force marching through its territory.

Lastly, as to the native question: the slave-trade would not be permitted; every encouragement would be given to the spreading of the Gospel and civilisation amongst the neighbouring tribes; the Republic would engage to make no hostile movement against the natives in the direction of the Colony, without the leave of the Governor, unless inroads, "contemplated attacks," or robbery rendered immediate action imperative; and as to other tribes, no attack would be made on them and no annexation of their land allowed unless it seemed essential to the safety of the Republic.

It is quite possible that, if the Cape Government had accepted the somewhat elastic terms whose gist is here given, the Boer trouble might never have arisen, whilst the Colony would have been saved the Zulu War.

However, it is of little profit to speculate on what might have been. Whilst these terms were being submitted, a practical commentary on the last of them was afforded by a cattle-and-slave-stealing Boer raid into Pondoland, justified by the "lifting" of a few Boer cattle, and headed by Pretorius himself. Whether this can be called a crime or not, after allowance has been made for

the Boer theory of native rights, there can be no doubt that it was a blunder. The Cape Government felt that it was impossible to reconcile the methods of the Boers with the view of the native question taken by public opinion in England, and the Volksraad was curtly informed that the Boers were still British subjects. The Home Government could not make up its mind to take any decided step for the enlarging of its possessions in South Africa; but it instructed Napier to write, as he did on September 3, 1841, that "Her Majesty had desired him to inform the Emigrant Farmers that she could not acknowledge a portion of her own subjects as an Independent Republic, but that on their receiving a military force from the Colony, their trade would be placed on the footing of the trade of a British possession."

To this proposal the Volksraad returned an immediate and decided negative. They had already issued a long defence of their State against the charge of cattle-stealing: they now put forth a proclamation which reads, with its appeal from the injustice of men to the justice and power of God, like the words of the old Huguenots or Covenanters, and would be equally admir-

able if the oppression against which it thundered were any worse than the refusal of a right to dragoon and enslave the natives at pleasure. The Boers insisted that their way of dealing with the natives was that of true philanthropy; that, at any rate, it was the only one which could ensure their safety in Natal; and that the English Government, considerate as it was for the brutal Kaffirs, would not care if the Boers, their wives and children, were all butchered like sheep. There were only two courses, they said, open to them: one was to leave their painfully-acquired homes and commence a new emigration; the other to take arms and fight for their liberty. Which, they asked, would his Excellency, as an Englishman, think preferable in similar circumstances?

The emigrant Boers have tried both these alternatives, and the consequence is that their descendants of to-day are a backward, ignorant, and, as far as the treatment of natives and the keeping of treaties are concerned, a demoralised people. So much depends upon the principle to the defence of which the spirit of the Covenanter and the Huguenot, admirable in itself, may be applied! It never occurred to the Volksraad that

there was yet a third course, to try the English methods, under which Cape Colony and Natal have prospered at least as greatly as the Transvaal or the Free State.

On the receipt of the reply of the Boers, Captain Smith, with some 300 men, made a rapid march across country to Natal, where he was saluted by the Boers with the statement that they had placed themselves under the protection of Holland. The fact was that the supercargo of a Dutch ship had succeeded in passing himself off as a delegate from the sympathetic homeland of the Boers. By his aid "treaties were drawn out containing proposals of peace and alliance with the Kings of Holland, France, and Spain, the President of the United States, and the Emperor of China! The despatches for the King of Holland were enclosed between the double soles of a pair of boots, made expressly for the diplomatic supercargo, and this stretch of ingenuity the Boers were fully convinced the English Government could never circumvent."

History does not state what the latter of the potentates to whom appeal was made thought of the proposal. The King of Holland seems to have duly received his missive, for he wrote to the

English Government to say "that the disloyal communication of the Emigrant Farmers had been repelled with indignation, and that the King of Holland had taken every possible step to mark his disapproval of the unjustifiable use made of his name by the individuals referred to." The respect which European Governments now have for the Boers is evidently a plant of very recent growth.

A small war followed. At first Captain Smith followed the course, so common to modern England in South Africa, of underrating his opponents. In a skirmish he lost some men, and was driven to entrench himself and be besieged. One King got away, however, and by a plucky ride to Graham's Town, through a dangerous country, brought up reinforcements. On the appearance of a frigate and a regiment, the Boers, who had been besieging Captain Smith for a month, with three guns and 600 men, melted away from Pretorius, who was forced to make terms. A general amnesty was issued by the British, and a provisional government installed. The emigrants admitted themselves to be British subjects. For some time negotiations went on in order to secure a *modus vivendi* for Boers and British on the native ques-

tion. But they were hardly successful ; and when in 1844 Natal was declared a dependency of the Cape Colony, the greater number of the emigrants took to their waggons once more and trekked back across the Drakenberg, to settle in the thinly populated Boer districts lying directly north and south of the Vaal River. It is only within the last decade that they ever again attempted to cross the mountains.

II. *The Transvaal and the Free State*

We have thus seen how, when Natal was added to the Cape Colony, the greater part of the Emigrant Farmers again took flight from the encroaching English laws. The northward road along the coast was closed by Portugal and the fever-stricken marshes around Delagoa Bay. Therefore the only course for those who desired liberty to pursue the "proper treatment" of the natives was to turn back over the Drakenberg, and to spread out upon the fertile land that lies in the basins of the Orange, the Limpopo, and the Vaal Rivers. Some of their brethren were already settled there, and in a short time room was found for all in the territory from which they had, only a

few years before, driven the savage warriors of Moselekatse. On the way they were met by other proclamations from the Cape, reminding them that they were still British subjects; and for a while they made no protest.

By this time, however, the Boers were divided into two parties. The later comers, whether from Natal or the south, were hotter against England than those who had not had the mortification of being dispossessed of a country that they had taken as their own. Towards the end of 1842, the irreconcilables had intended to proclaim the whole country north of the Orange River as an independent republic. They were forestalled, owing to the information given to the English officials by the loyal party, and a British claim was made to the whole territory east of E. long. 22° and south of S. lat. 25°, except in so far as it already belonged to Portugal or to natives.

In the following year, treaties made by the Cape Government with the Griquas exasperated the Boers more than anything which had yet happened. The Griquas, they said, with some justice, were as much British subjects as they were; yet the independence of these semi-savages was ac-

knowledged, and they were admitted to the position of allies, and furnished with arms, whilst white men with exactly the same claims to freedom were told that, go where they would, they could not throw off their allegiance, except that while living in native territory they were under the jurisdiction of native chiefs. The curious spectacle was beheld of the Boers, who had left the Cape Colony because the natives were given equal rights with themselves, now suing humbly for equal rights with the natives. "It is not our intention," they reminded the Governor, "to drive the coloured people from their possessions or dwellings; but it is our wish that measures should be adopted to give us also rights." The refusal to consider this petition alienated even those who had hitherto been loyal from the English Government, and the Boers proceeded to show how they would act when placed in a position faintly comparable to that in which they had always kept the Hottentots at the Cape.

In the first place, the government of Potgieter, at Potchefstroom, the district already mentioned north of the Vaal River, issued a proclamation in April, 1844, repudiating the treaty by which Natal

had been added to the Colony, and declaring itself "a free and independent Burgher Society." Potgieter and his friends had visions of including all the Boers north of the Orange River under their government. As an instalment of their aims, they made war on the insolent Griquas, who claimed independence, "to larn them to be a twoad." In the course of the proceedings they found themselves unexpectedly at close quarters with a troop of English cavalry, and incontinently broke and fled, with the loss of three men.

For two or three years affairs dragged along, the unfortunate Cape Government being always engaged in the task of reconciling the claims of the Boers and the pretensions of the natives, which was about as easy as to solve the old scholastic problem of the effects of an irresistible force upon an immovable body. In 1846, a Conference was summoned, which led to nothing, when the attention of the Government was called away by another Kaffir War. In the meantime a general move northwards had taken place among those of the emigrants who were chiefly opposed to the British rule, to the districts immediately north and south of the Vaal. Mr. Potgieter, Commandant

of the double district, resided chiefly at Magaliesberg in the Kashan Mountains, north of the modern Pretoria. It was about this time, if the testimony of Livingstone is to be believed, that Potgieter's followers, having heard of the arrival of Herschel's great telescope at the Cape Observatory, sent to inquire "what right the Government had to erect that huge instrument at the Cape, in order to see what they were doing behind the Kashan Mountains"—nearly a thousand miles away!

Potgieter himself, who was still set upon escape beyond the utmost limits of the British rule, had spent his time in exploring the "monstrous cantle" of land cut out by the semi-circular sweep of the Limpopo, whither he had looked with longing ever since British troops arrived in Natal. He made more than one attempt to break out to Delagoa Bay, but the deadly tsetse fly proved a more solid barrier than even Zulu assegais or British bayonets. In 1845 there was a general move of the emigrants to the north and north-east, where, amongst other places, they founded the village of Lydenburg, where the first Transvaal gold was to be found a generation later. They thought they had discovered

the Nile and the Egyptians. More native quarrels, undertaken by the emigrants, as usual, in self-defence against real or "contemplated attacks," led to the acquisition of many thousands of cattle and sheep, with which the Boers added to their already ample stocks, and settled down to the pastoral and patriarchal life, which is only now being rudely disturbed by the march of progress.

In 1847, Pretorius became the spokesman of the Boers who had remained in Natal, for the redress of some very real grievances as to the tenure of their land. The Governor, Sir Henry Pottinger, most unwisely refused even to see him. On his return to the Orange River, with the plan of a new migration in his head, he was welcomed by the Boers everywhere as a hero, and he was freely compared to Moses about to guide the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. The enthusiasm was immense, and the tide of Boer emigrants from the Colony, which had never ceased for twelve years, was greater for a few months than it had been since 1838.

At the end of 1847, Sir Harry Smith arrived as the new Governor of the Cape Colony. The hero of Aliwal and Sobraon, Smith was already

favourably known at the Cape, and men looked to him with hope and enthusiasm for a "strong" policy which should settle at once the native question and the Boer grievances. Sir Harry has been described as a curious mixture. "Brave and dashing to a degree, he united to his dash a wit and cunning which fitted him well for the country he came to govern. . . He possessed an uncontrollable temper, and when excited, his oaths were fearful. But the paroxysm over, he immediately became the courteous and sympathetic commander." An excellent man to negotiate with Kaffirs, he was not so well adapted to deal with the stubborn Boers. However, his rule had the good effect of making a division amongst the emigrants. It has often been asked why we have never had any trouble with the Free State, but so much with the Transvaal? The answer is to be read in the history of their foundation.

Sir Harry Smith had known most of the emigrant Boers twelve years before. He was unaware of the great change in their nature, and especially in their sentiments towards England, which had been brought about by the intervening events. He thought, therefore, that his personal influence

would avail to stay the growing discontent. Pretorius had just headed a final emigration from Natal when the Governor summoned him to a conference, and then sent him round the country to ascertain how the farmers would receive a proclamation of British rule over their new territories. Pretorius said afterwards that he had assured the Governor that they would not endure it: the Governor told a contrary story. In any case, such a proclamation was issued on February 3, 1848, declaring the Queen's sovereignty over the whole country between the Orange and the Vaal Rivers, eastward to the Quathlamba Mountains. The Home Government consented to the step with some reluctance, but in the sincere belief that the natives required protection from the Boers, whilst the better-disposed farmers, being in a state of anarchy, would gladly submit to a strong settled government which allowed them any local authority that they chose. About a quarter of the Boers in the annexed district were loyal. Of the rest, a great number again moved north into the Transvaal, which was now looked upon by both parties as the natural refuge of the disaffected and the disloyal. Then it was that the

Transvaal acquired the character, which it has never lost, of being what Mr. Froude calls "the Alsatia of South Africa." Not only were the disaffected Boers taking refuge across the Vaal, but many men of a much worse character. "Some of these men," says the impartial Mr. Theal, "were fugitives from their creditors, others were deserters from the army, a few were even escaped criminals. The influence of such persons upon a simple and credulous people like the Emigrant Farmers was all for evil." In our own day we have seen Fenians play the same part, if Sir Bartle Frere and Scotland Yard are to be trusted in their estimate of the causes of the Transvaal War.

Sir Harry Smith's proclamation stamped this character on the Transvaal, and events speedily emphasized it. Many of the emigrants were not disposed to be dispossessed of their farms south of the Vaal without striking a blow for them. They turned in this emergency to the man who had saved them from the Zulu; who had carried their complaints to the English Governor; who had been hailed by his fellow-countrymen as the Moses of a new Exodus. The messenger found Pretorius in circumstances that might be told of

an antique Roman, and bear witness to the finest side of the Boer character. His wife, to whom he was utterly devoted, was lying on her death-bed. The messenger could not urge him to leave her; but this heroic woman had courage to do so. "By staying here," she said, "you cannot save my life; your countrymen need your services, go and help them." He went, and never saw her again alive.

In July, Pretorius crossed the Vaal with an armed party. He captured Bloemfontein peaceably, and expelled the British resident. Sir Harry Smith's reply, when the news came to him, was to offer a reward of £1,000 for the apprehension of the rebel leader, and to march to the front with all the available troops of the Colony. Nothing but a shower of bullets could persuade the Governor that the rebels would venture to fire on his sacred person. At Boomplaats, on the road to Bloemfontein, he was rudely undeceived, and scattered the Boer forces, after what he—a veteran soldier—described as "one of the most severe skirmishes that had ever, he believed, been witnessed." There, for the present, ended all Pretorius's dreams of a Boer State bounded by the Orange River. The

district between the Orange and the Vaal Rivers was formed into the "Orange River Sovereignty," attached to the Cape Colony; only six years later it was handed over to its own people and became the present Orange Free State.

Pretorius and most of his followers had placed themselves in safety on the other side of the Vaal River, having prudently made all preparations for flight in the event of defeat. There for a time they busied themselves in settling down in their new homes. The Cape Government did not interfere with them, further than to put a price of £2,000 on their leader's head. By the year 1851, it had become apparent to the Government that, as the Transvaal was independent in fact, it had better be made so in theory. Mr. Pretorius's outlawry was reversed. He was then invited to confer with a British agent for the settlement of the Transvaal's independence. At this time there were certain internal dissensions between the parties of Potgieter and Pretorius, which prevented its being certain that the latter could speak for the whole country; but these were happily composed on the return of Mr. Pretorius from his errand of peace.

The terms of the Transvaal's independence were settled by what is known as the Sand River Convention, signed on January 17, 1852. It began by guaranteeing to the Emigrant Farmers, beyond the Vaal River, "the right to manage their own affairs and to govern themselves according to their own laws, without any interference on the part of the British Government; and that no encroachment shall be made by the said Government on the territory beyond, to the north of the Vaal River." This clause was afterwards asserted to have been broken by the annexation of the Transvaal, by those who forget that the two parties to a treaty can abrogate it if they please; for it is certain, as will be seen later, that we were tacitly invited into the Transvaal. Further, it was agreed that no slavery should be "permitted or practised" in the Transvaal by the Emigrant Farmers. Free passage was to be given to all traders and explorers through the Transvaal: this provision was steadily broken by the Boers for nearly twenty years. Criminals who fled from justice either way across the Vaal were to be delivered up, if required. The sale of ammunition to the natives was prohibited, and free entrance to

the Transvaal was permitted to any Colonial subjects who desired to emigrate. Such were the provisions of the original Charter of the South African Republic.

CHAPTER VII

THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, 1852–1877

THE history of the first Republic in the Transvaal is of a comparatively tame and quiet sort. Small native wars, internal dissensions, attempts at progress, and ultimate bankruptcy make up a much less stirring tale than the romantic exploits of the Voertrekkers. It falls into two periods: that of President Pretorius, which was a time of seclusion and opposition to European ideas; and that of President Burgers, which was, in its way, a time of progress, in which gold mines and railways first dawned upon the consciousness of the Transvaal Boer as possibilities of good or evil.

When the Sand River Convention placed the Boers in quiet possession of the Transvaal, there were about 5,000 families of Europeans in the country. These were divided among four districts, ruled by Commandants of equal rank and inde-

pendent of one another. This arrangement was made by the Volksraad, or Parliament, of the Transvaal, in order to appease the jealousies existing between the chief leaders, of whom the two most important were Potgieter and Pretorius.

There seems to be considerable dubiety as to the exact political constitution of the Transvaal for some time after its independence was assured. Some writers describe these four districts as independent Republics, whilst others seem to imagine that they were simply four divisions of a single State. The question is not of much importance, and it is probable that the burghers themselves, in their loose and impatient notions of government, would have been somewhat puzzled to give a complete answer to it. The fact is clear that the most important of these districts, or republics, was that which made Potchefstroom its capital, and was under the joint control of Potgieter and Pretorius. It gradually absorbed the others, until, by 1860, it had covered the whole ground of the Transvaal. It was known at first as the "Dutch African Republic," but in 1858 it adopted the more ambitious official title of the "South African Republic," which has been again usurped by its descendant,

the Transvaal State of to-day. In it, there was indubitably no man equal in ability or in personal reputation to Pretorius, who, although never formally elected President, had no serious rival but Potgieter.

In July, 1853, the new State lost the services of this excellent man, to whom, more than to any other, it owed its being. "Incessant mental labour," says Mr. Theal, "had told upon an iron constitution. . . For a month he lay upon a bed of sickness, where he continued to display those admirable qualities which had made him worthy of being the hero of the emigrants. Feeling that his end was near, he put all the papers relative to the government in order, and then sent for the Commandants, Field-cornets, and other influential men, to hear his last advice. They assembled round his bedside, when he entreated them to preserve a cordial union among themselves, and not to let party strife or ambition find a place among them. He recommended them to give heed to the exhortations of the minister, and to promote morality and civilisation by every means in their power. Afterwards, several native chiefs were admitted to see him. They had heard of his ill-

ness, and had come to pay their respects. The relatives of the dying man were much affected on seeing these heathen exhibit intense grief, as they knelt successively and kissed his hand. To them he had appeared as a preserver of order in the land, as a gracious and humane master. Everything connected with this world having been settled, Pretorius devoted his remaining hours to praise and prayer. He expressed perfect resignation to the will of the Almighty, and satisfaction at the prospect of being speedily transferred to a region where sorrow and trouble are unknown. Then, having committed his soul to his Saviour, he calmly and quietly breathed his last." Such a record carries us back to the days of the Puritans of our own country, whom Pretorius strongly resembled in character. Admirable in many ways, he was only to be blamed for faults which are those of his country and upbringing rather than of his character.

On the death of Pretorius, his country showed no lack of gratitude. His son, Marthinus Wessels Pretorius, was unanimously elected President, and land was purchased near the head-waters of the Limpopo for the erection of a town which should

bear the dead hero's name: it is the modern capital, Pretoria, formally founded in 1855.

One of the first steps of the new President was to give effect to the tendency of all the Boers to close their country to visitors: especially to such as were suspected of having an eye to the education of the natives. Missionaries thus were the most unwelcome of all, from the Boer point of view. The story of the attack on Livingstone has already been told. No less than five mission-stations were similarly broken up within a few years. A trader was fined 500 rix-dollars for making public the road to Lake Ngami: a law was passed to prevent Englishmen or Germans from holding land in the Transvaal, and another to prohibit the raising and working of minerals. Every attempt, in short, was made to keep the outside world ignorant about the doings of the Republic; and for some dozen years the plan was quite successful.

An excellent historian of South Africa, Mr. Noble, has described the tendency of this period very well. "The Sand River Convention of 1852," he says, "was interpreted by the emigrants as placing all the country north of the Vaal River,

and inland as far as the Equator, under their control, and they were very jealous of any encroachment upon it, especially by British subjects. To such an extent did they carry this feeling, that they adopted a policy of isolation. They had little intercourse with the parent Colony, or even the adjoining Free State, and scarcely ever saw any of their countrymen, whose superior character or intelligence might influence them." The few Hollanders who made their way into the Transvaal, whence Europeans of any other nationality were debarred, were mischievous demagogues of the stamp of the "bankrupt bookseller from Amsterdam," of whom Livingstone relates that he established a great reputation for a time by denouncing Queen Victoria as the Scarlet Woman of Babylon, against whom all Christians ought to fight as against Antichrist; then he married a Boer woman and suddenly disappeared from the public ken. "It happened, however," goes on Mr. Noble, "that the discovery made by Owen and Murray and Dr. and Mrs. Livingstone of Lake Ngami gave a stimulus to travelling to the interior. Several parties started—some in pursuit of game, some for purposes of trade, and some for geo-

graphical study. The Boers were apprehensive that the English Government would again follow them up if they did not stop these proceedings. They also feared that the numberless natives to the north of them would be supplied with arms and ammunition. For these reasons they attempted to block up the path, refusing any passage through the Republic, and in some instances ordering the expulsion of visitors across the Vaal." It was thus, as has been seen, that they came into collision with the great Livingstone, when "the Boers resolved to shut up the country," and he determined to open it.

Among the various causes of this dislike of foreign investigation was, no doubt, the fact that the Republic was knowingly contravening one of the most important clauses in the Charter of its existence. The Sand River Convention had declared that slavery would not be permitted. Possibly the Boers had been quite honest in their declarations, when they began to trek, twenty years before, that they were as convinced as the English of the wickedness and the folly of the slave system. In that case, they had come to alter their views. "Slaves," indeed, they would

not have; but how could a Boer get his work done without "apprentices," who had to work without payment and could not change their master or task without his permission? Accordingly, in 1856 the Volksraad passed an Apprentice's Act, which really established a system of thinly disguised slavery in the Transvaal; and in 1858 was enacted the *Grond Wet*, or Fundamental Law of the Constitution, declaring that "the people would tolerate no equality of persons of colour with the white inhabitants, either in State or Church." More will be said on this subject in the next chapter.

The Boers had dimly begun to understand, too, that their methods of ruling the natives, efficient and complete as they might be, were apt to lead to disagreeable comment if they came to the ears of the English authorities. One of the grimmest of all the massacres in which they were ever concerned, either actively or passively, took place in 1854. One Hermanus Potgieter, in charge of a party of thirteen men, ten women and children, had gone, contrary to law, to barter ivory with a Kaffir chief named Makapan. Perhaps the Boer's demeanour angered the chief; perhaps his show

of wealth inflamed the greed of the Kaffirs. No witnesses survived on either side to say what the facts were. But we know that the Kaffirs murdered the whole party of Boers, carrying their cruelty so far as to flay Potgieter alive and make his skin into a *kaross* or cloak. The retribution was swift and terrible. Four hundred armed Boers assembled, under President Pretorius, to hunt down the murderers. "The Kaffirs fled to a huge cavern, some 2000 feet in length and 400 or 500 in width, which was closely blockaded by the Boers. . . Frantic with thirst, the imprisoned Kaffirs sought at night to reach the water that flows near the cave, but were shot down in the attempt; quarter was a word unknown, and after twenty-five days' blockade, the cavern was entered and its horrors seen. According to Commandant Pretorius—who would have no interest in exaggerating the figures—900 Kaffirs had been killed outside the cavern, and more than double that number had died of thirst within it." The present President Krüger took an active share in this piece of wild revenge, as he did also in the commando that raided Sechelé's country and destroyed the house of Dr. Livingstone. Oom Paul must have

forgotten the deeds of his youth when he talked with pious horror of the bloodshed caused by the raid of Dr. Jameson.

The next event of any importance under the rule of the second Pretorius was an attempt of the South African Republic to annex the Orange Free State. This was the earliest of those numerous instances in which the Boers have acted on their theory that might is right in questions of land-owning. It seems completely to cut the ground from under their feet when they complain, on purely moral considerations, of their own territory being threatened by armed raiders. We shall hear more of this later on.

Pretorius actually crossed the Vaal, at the head of a large commando, to take possession of the territory of the friendly Boer Republic. Its President, who had had some warning, met him with a similar force. Neither party was very willing to come to blows, and finally a harmless but inglorious peace was patched up, in which the Republics mutually recognised each other's independent *status*.

In 1860 Pretorius, who was still working in an underground manner for the union of the Boer

States, suddenly left the Transvaal, resigned his Presidency of it, and was elected President of the Orange Free State. It is to be supposed that he had some hope of uniting the two countries under his personal sway. But the Free State very sensibly refused to be dragged into the troubles already showing their heads in the Transvaal, and it has had its reward in forty years of internal and external peace.

In 1864 Pretorius returned to the Transvaal, and was re-elected President there. His sudden departure, which had caused much indignation at the time, had been forgotten in the troubles that had arisen in his absence. The Transvaal had been the theatre of a civil war on a small scale. One Schoeman, who had been appointed Acting President on Pretorius's defection, had endeavoured to make himself independent of the Volksraad. Paul Krüger was sent to attack him. "Schoeman," says the historian, "took refuge in Potchefstroom. The hostile commando blockaded the town, and bombarded it at a great distance with small cannon, not doing much harm." Ultimately Schoeman was compelled to flee across the Vaal River and take refuge with Pretorius. The next

year he raised the standard of rebellion again, and Krüger was again sent against him. After a defeat on each side, the valiant warriors had had enough of battle, and terms of peace were arranged. The return of Pretorius put an end to all these internal dissensions for a time.

The second Presidentship of Pretorius was marked by the gradual advance of that insolvency in which the Republic ultimately sank its independence. It was hardly to be expected that the Boers' rural training should have made them good men of business, and such European advisers as they had were mostly intent upon lining their own pockets. "The intestine disturbances," says Mr. Nixon, who took great pains to acquaint himself with the true state of the country, "and the incessant Kaffir wars had well-nigh exhausted the finances of the Republic. The exchequer was only tardily replenished under a loose system of taxation. The Boers have never been good tax-payers, and no government has been able to enforce the proper payment of taxes due to the State. . . A decade after its establishment, the Republic was practically insolvent. Even as early as 1857 the Government was compelled to issue

mandaten, or bills, wherewith to raise money to buy ammunition, and to pay its servants. In 1866, a regular issue of paper-money was sanctioned by the Volksraad. This was followed by further issues, until, in 1867, a Finance Commission found there were more notes in circulation than had been authorised by the Volksraad. Nevertheless, the financial requirements of the State became so pressing that still more issues had to be made, and in 1870 there was over £73,000 worth of notes in circulation. The notes were declared a legal tender, but the Government were unable to keep up their value by artificial methods. They fell to a low ebb, and passed from hand to hand at a discount of about 75% from their nominal value."

In 1867 took place two events which, though they had no great direct influence on the Transvaal at the time, really were the germs of its future development and of the state of things there at the present day. These were the discovery of diamonds in the district of Kimberley, and the finding of gold in the Lydenburg district of the Transvaal itself. The Boers did what they could to oppose the immediate influx of European miners, and for some time they were successful in checking

it. But the road to Pretoria was at last opened up by the diamond miners who diverged to the west, and the gold miners to the east, and from 1867 onward the Transvaal began to have relations with the world outside, for the first time in its history. For some years, indeed, the various genuine teachers and preachers who had found their way into the Transvaal had begun to diffuse modern ideas amongst the farmers. Contact with diggers of many races at the diamond mines and gold fields, where a market for all kinds of produce attracted all but the most backward Boers by its abnormal prices, did much to increase the effect of these. A small stream of traffic had begun to flow across the Transvaal, from Lydenburg to Kimberley. "Such a highway causes modern ideas to flourish as surely as water running over dry ground causes grass to spring up." Both from Europe and the Cape Colony, too, other agricultural settlers had at last been attracted by the beauty and fertility of the country, the low price of land, or the opportunities for successful and remunerative trading. From 1870 to 1877 it was calculated that the average European, non-Boer population of Lydenburg fluctuated

from 500 to 1,000. An English newspaper was published at the gold fields, and the journals of Pretoria and Potchefstroom catered largely for English readers. The Anglo-Saxon race had fairly begun to make its appearance in the Transvaal.

The triumph of the party of modern ideas in the Republic was marked by the accession to the Presidency, in 1872, of Mr. T. F. Burgers, in place of Mr. Pretorius, who had lost his popularity and office in consequence of his failure to make good the claim of the Republic to a piece of land disputed between that State, Griqualand West, and the Free State. The new President had been a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, where the breadth of his views had exposed him to an accusation of heresy. "He was a brilliant speaker, and a man of undoubted talent and wide views. He was impressed with lofty notions of a coming Dutch African Republic for the whole of South Africa; but his ideas were altogether too visionary and unpractical for the people he had to deal with. A considerable minority were opposed to him from the first on account of his religious views. His determined efforts to infuse some vigour and

'go' into the stolid and ignorant Boers made him still more enemies; and his precipitancy and want of practical knowledge brought to a head the crash which had been long impending."

It is impossible to deny that many of Mr. Burgers's proposals would have been for the permanent good of his country and of South Africa if they could but have been carried out. But he had too unpromising material to work with. He began by a vigorous attempt to straighten out the finances, and concluded a loan with a Cape bank, which enabled him to redeem the depreciated paper-money. He intended to replace it by a coinage of the newly discovered Lydenburg gold: "a few coins were struck, and are now greatly prized by collectors." But the continued disinclination of the Boers to pay taxes balked all his schemes for the extrication of the Republic from its money difficulties, and it is said that, at the conclusion of Mr. Burgers's Presidency, the British officials found only 12*s.* 6*d.* in the treasury!

Mr. Burgers's excellent project of an educational system was equally unfortunate. It was drafted on the latest educational principles:

teachers were specially imported from Holland, but no pupils were forthcoming, and their chief, Dr. Jorissen, had to turn Attorney-General in order to have something to do. Mr. Burgers also designed a coat of arms and a flag for his country.

Of all his plans, perhaps the most important was that of a railway from Pretoria to Delagoa Bay, which has since been carried out. Railways and education, it has been well said, are the factors of the future African civilisation, and Mr. Burgers has the credit of having tried to give his fellow-countrymen both. But the Boer was not so speedily to be regenerated; even in 1877 it was apparent that the change in the policy of the Republic and in the ideas of its citizens had been too sudden and too great to be durable. The Transvaal had scarcely any decent roads, and its rivers were all unbridged; yet the sanguine President would have a railway. Our experience of to-day in Africa shows that this was not as wild an idea as it looked to contemporary eyes of twenty years ago.

In 1874 the Volksraad was persuaded to borrow £300,000 for the railway, on the security of

3,000,000 acres of cultivated land. The President, who foresaw some difficulty in negotiating the loan, went to Europe in order to appeal to the racial sentiment of Holland. His energetic and eloquent declamation brought in £90,000 of the £300,000 required. Instead of waiting for the rest, Mr Burgers at once saw success attained. "He bought a large quantity of rolling stock, including (characteristically enough) a state carriage for himself. He distributed commissions right and left, and, on the faith of great sums to come, spent more than he had obtained. The railway plant was delivered at Delagoa Bay before an inch of the railway was constructed or properly surveyed." In 1885 it still lay rotting there, "a monument of great ideas combined with an utter want of practical knowledge."

In the meantime, whilst the President was devising his great plans and failing to carry them out, the Native Question was looming more and more largely on the horizon. The Boer system of slave-raiding, which has already been sufficiently described, had roused bitter and implacable enmities on all their borders. Cetewayo, the Zulu king, to whom thirty years of peace with the white man

had restored the strength of Chaka and Dingaan, claimed a large tract of country which, as he alleged, the Boers had stolen from him, and hovered menacingly on the eastern border with his fierce regiments. "To the north of him the Amaswazi, over whom the Boers had asserted sovereign rights, brooded in sullen discontent. In the extreme north there was war and confusion both within and without the border. . . On the west the Bechuana were uneasy, and some of them, such as Mankoroane, who had been plundered of land, and Sechelé and Khama, who had been plundered of their subjects, showed symptoms of breaking out."

Worst of all was the trouble with Sekukuni, chief of the Bapedi, who inhabited the wild district where the Olifants River finds its passage through the mountain barrier of the Drakenberg. The difficulty seems to have arisen, as usual, through the claim laid by the Boers to the territory of Sekukuni, in virtue of an alleged treaty with a Swazi chief who posed as his overlord or conqueror. Many of the Bapedi had been to the diamond mines and brought home guns. Confident in their strength, they retaliated by encroaching on the territory of the Boers, and in June, 1876, the Volks-

raad sent a commando 1,400 strong to punish the "rebels." With the help of a savage Swazi contingent, who were allowed to butcher women and children to their hearts' content, two minor strongholds were taken. But Sekukuni's chief kraal was in a very strong natural position. "The Boers met with a stouter resistance than they expected. Their hearts failed them, and they fled ignominiously. Burgers tried in vain to rally them. He used the utmost force of his persuasive eloquence. He actually shed tears at their conduct, and it is said he asked them to shoot him rather than disgrace him. But they would not listen, and 1,000 out of the contingent of 1,400 trekked home, leaving him hemmed in and powerless."

The old commando system appeared, to observers of the moment, to have broken down for ever. The Boers were completely demoralised, although Sekukuni allowed Burgers to retreat without attacking him. The Volksraad rose to the occasion, and enlisted a corps of "free lances," "filibusters," or "volunteers," as they have variously been called, under the leadership of a Prussian adventurer, Von Schlieckmann, and a certain Fenian refugee, Mr. Aylward, who has left

a very well-written account of their services. "The Foreign Enlistment Act presented a few difficulties," says Mr. Aylward in describing how he picked up recruits at the Diamond Mines in British territory, "but these were overcome by a little ingenuity." It is pretty clear that the Transvaal authorities had as much right to utilise these men against the territory of Sekukuni, an independent chief, as Dr. Jameson had to use the Chartered Company's forces against the Transvaal: and no more. But a native had no rights; and even when the volunteers were accused of acts of singular barbarity, the Volksraad were well pleased that the war was being prosecuted with vigour.

But, though Sekukuni was soon compelled to sue for peace, Cetewayo was not so easily to be disposed of. The Boers, penniless and demoralised, were under the shadow of a black cloud that seemed as if its bursting might involve half of South Africa in storm.

Writing in the end of 1876, Mr. Theal said: "It is evident that the paramount South African Power cannot permit affairs to remain in this state much longer. The peace of all the colonies is

imperilled, and unless a change takes place within a few months, interference will be a necessity. Meantime the opinion is gaining ground in the Transvaal that the easiest way out of all these difficulties is by a return to allegiance to Great Britain. The party holding this view is yet in a minority, but any further disasters would have the effect of converting it at once into a majority. Under any circumstances, it must become a majority in course of time. For there is a yearning after union with the other countries of South Africa, and it is beginning to be recognised by even the most conservative of the Boers that such an union can only take place under the flag of England."

It was in these circumstances that the first South African Republic was annexed by this country, after a quarter of a century of independent existence. The story of how that event happened must form the subject of a new chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

ENGLAND IN THE TRANSVAAL, 1877-1880

THE Boers had given representative government a fair trial, and had not found it a success. Twenty-five years of independence had, as has just been seen, brought the South African Republic into a position of external peril and internal bankruptcy. The Boers were now to have an opportunity of giving England a still briefer, yet sharper and more effective lesson in the folly of attempting to govern a race that one does not understand by men and methods that are equally foreign to their ideas and comprehension. Perhaps the historian of the twentieth century will count the temporary occupation of the Transvaal, and its disgraceful end, amongst the various valuable experiences that have gone to build up England's colonial policy, which is only beginning to acquire firmness and coherence. In the meantime, it is not an episode upon which an English writer can

be expected to linger with any pleasure. Yet the truth must be told, so far as it can yet be discerned through the shifting haze of party feeling. It seems to be somewhat as follows.

As early as October, 1876, Lord Carnarvon, the English Colonial Secretary of the day, had informed the President of the South African Republic that the Government could not "consent to view passively and with indifference the engagement of the Republic in foreign military operations, the object or the necessity of which had not been made apparent." To this the President replied by a barren defence of the right of his State to the land of the Transvaal. A little later Mr. Burgers, in a speech delivered before the Volksraad, declared his belief that to accept a South African confederation under the British flag was the only clear way out of their difficulties. This seems to have been generally accepted as a tacit invitation to this country to take over the thankless tasks of a discredited government. And we soon find that the famous argument of "a house on fire next door" was used in allusion to the successes of Sekukuni and the threats of Cetewayo.

The position of the South African Republic in the early months of 1877 could scarcely have been worse than it was. The old pioneers of the country, the rustic, hardy, God-fearing Boers of the Veldt, whose treatment of the natives was the only serious fault that could be alleged against them, had parted with much of their political powers to those noisy and self-seeking demagogues who have been the curse of too many rising nations. President Burgers seems to have been an honest and well-intentioned man; but he had not the gift of choosing equally excellent persons for his subordinates. The State was heavily in debt. "Its creditors were clamorous; whilst the executive, turn to which side it would, found itself confronted by threats, reproaches, accusations of slavery and cruelty."

The President himself, coming near to desperation in the last days of his rule, spoke some very stinging home truths to the Volksraad. "I would rather," he declared, "be a policeman under a strong government than a President of such a State. It is you—you members of the Raad and the Boers, who have ruined the country, who have sold your independence for a drink. You have

ill-treated the natives, you have shot them down, you have sold them into slavery, and now you have to pay the penalty." In the "Vindication" which he left for posthumous publication, Mr. Burgers declared that this charge was nothing to what he might have said. "Had I not endured in silence," he wrote, "had I not borne patiently all the vile accusations, but out of selfishness or fear told the plain truth of the case, the Transvaal would never have had the consideration it has now received from Great Britain. However unjust the annexation was, my self-justification would have exposed the Boers to such an extent, and the state of the country in such a way, that it would have deprived both of the sympathy of the world and the consideration of the English politicians."

It is probable that in this strong and sweeping charge Mr. Burgers alluded mainly to the treatment of the natives and the encouragement of the slave trade. The annexation of the Transvaal has been looked on by the Boers of late years as a breach of the Sand River Convention; but, if it had been fully proved that the Republic had, from its earliest to its latest day, been in the habit of breaking the third clause of that Convention, which

provided for the abolition of all slavery, this argument would scarcely have had much weight.

This, indeed, is so important a point that it is necessary to seek for some glimmering of the real facts from amongst the confused mass of statements which have been made on the subject of slavery in the Transvaal. Tinged as these uniformly are with the political sentiments of both African and English parties, it is a matter of some difficulty to make them unite into the white light of truth. But the attempt at least must be made.

The reader has already seen that the emigrant Boers, although they publicly attributed their dislike of the English rule in great measure to the forced emancipation of their slaves, had yet, strangely enough, admitted their sense of the justice of that decree, and had officially asserted a willingness, even in exile, to comply with its provisions. It has also been seen to what extent these admirable sentiments must be discounted by the exactment of the laws of 1856 and 1858, designed to reduce the coloured population of the Transvaal to a condition of serfdom and villeinage, called apprenticeship, if not of confessed slavery.

It is clear, from a proclamation issued in 1859 by Mr. Pretorius, that the forbidden "slavery" then existed in the Transvaal, side by side with the legal "apprenticeship." After quoting the article of the Sand River Convention which forbade slavery and the slave-trade, this document went on as follows:—"The Commandants and Field-cornets are hereby ordered to bring the same to the notice of the inhabitants of their wards without delay, and shall report all such cases having the least semblance of slave-trading to the Landdrosts." This proclamation, in itself, is strong evidence in favour of the actual existence of slavery in the South African Republic. Men do not make laws against offences which are not known to exist. I never heard of a plain man locking his stable door when there was no steed to be stolen.

But all mention of this subject was carefully avoided in the proclamation which added the Transvaal to the English dominions. Let us, for the moment, imitate that prudent course of action, and confine ourselves to the investigation of the system of "apprenticeship" which formed part of the legal system of the South African Republic throughout its separate existence. To the

apprentices themselves, and to the unenlightened natives, whose territories bordered on the Transvaal, this system was indistinguishable from slavery itself. Thus, to take a single one out of the many instances that lie buried in Blue Books, we find a complaint sent to the Queen by that Christian chief Khama, whose recent visit has made him well known in England, and whose words ought to appeal especially to those philanthropists who now befriend the Boers. Khama wrote, in 1876, to ask for English protection against his neighbours of the Transvaal, who were then seriously beginning those westward raids into Bechuanaland which the present year has seen so curiously reversed by Dr. Jameson and his companions.

"The Boers are coming into my country," wrote Khama, "and I do not like them. Their actions are cruel amongst us black people. We are like money: they sell us and our children. . . There are three things which distress me very much—war, selling people, and drink. All these I shall find in the Boers, and it is these things which destroy people, to make an end of them in the country. The custom of the Boers has always

been to cause people to be sold, and to-day they are still selling people. Last year I saw them pass with two waggons full of people whom they had bought at the river at Tanane."

But Khama, even if a Christian native, was still a native, and the Boers and their apologists will not allow his charges to have weight. They are apt, indeed, to parody the words of Mr. Justice Stareleigh, and say to their critics, "You mustn't tell us what the native said: it's not evidence." Unfortunately, there is no lack of white testimony to the same effect. In 1868 an English traveller roundly accused the Boers of purchasing native children, "who, with those captured in their wars with the tribes, remained in a condition of slavery until released by death." Nor was the trade, he declared, confined to children: men and women, of any age, taken by illegitimate means, were sold or exchanged for cattle and goods.

It was clearly at this sort of thing that President Pretorius's proclamation of 1859 was aimed. We are bound to suppose that it was the work solely of these wild and lawless nomad Boers of the frontier, who have so often brought their State into disrepute by their marauding expeditions, and whom

the Republic, devoid of police and of a standing army, has always declared itself powerless to control or to punish: to whom are attributable murders like those of Captain Elliot and Mr. Bethell, and cruelties like those which Colonel Lanyon asserted to have been practised on the minor captives of the War of Independence. No State, of course, can properly be held responsible for acts committed by its wildest subjects. It was on this ground, no doubt, that President Burgers, in 1874, felt himself able to declare that not a single proof could be given for "such a false and improper charge against the Government of this State" as that of encouraging or permitting slavery. "I do not mean to say," he carefully added, "that there has not existed in this State, more especially in past times, a system of apprenticeship of natives who have been taken in war."

President Burgers's ecclesiastical training had evidently included a course of scholastic logic, with its nice distinctions. Other people were not so keen at dividing hairs between the north and north-west side. Here, for instance, is what another Dutch clergyman wrote on the subject of appren-

ticeship, in a book published at Utrecht in 1869. His testimony has never, to my knowledge, been seriously impugned.

"Till their twenty-second year, or in some places till their twenty-fifth, [the native children taken in war or purchased] are apprenticed. During this period they are obliged to serve their masters without any payment. The Boers say, 'This is fair, because we must be compensated for the care and expense of their bringing up.' Care and expense, forsooth! No sooner are the wretched children able to walk than they are set to watch the cattle, or to nurse their mistress's youngest child, which may be as big and twice as heavy as they are. Till their twenty-second or twenty-fifth year! And all the time with no reward, but perhaps a ragged garment, abuse, oaths, blows! And when the specified period of apprenticeship is at an end, are they free? Who will set them free? Who will tell them what the law provides? Not a soul. This is slavery, in the fullest sense of the word, with this difference, that slave-states have their laws and inspectors, who at least keep harsh owners within certain limits; whilst here nobody—I say, not a soul—cares for the slaves' welfare, and

they are completely given over to the caprice of their cruel masters, and often yet more cruel mistresses. . . After this, let no one say that slavery or the slave-trade are abolished in any part of the Transvaal Republic!"

A German missionary, again, who was asked by President Burgers to report on the condition of the natives in the Transvaal in 1875, was equally frank. He also would have none of the hair-splitting distinctions of the law. "I understand slaves," he wrote in his report, which was afterwards sent to Lord Carnarvon, "to be persons who, against their own will and agreement, by craft, persuasion, or violence, are brought into a state of servitude for a definite or an indefinite period; who have no legal right to claim wages for their service; who are not free before the expiration of a prescribed time, to engage themselves to any other master, or to return to their families and relations. . . And if I am now asked to say conscientiously whether such slavery has existed since 1852, and been recognised and permitted by the Government, I must answer in the affirmative." He gave chapter and verse for many instances in support of this theory, but a

mere reference to the laws of the Republic was sufficient to establish it.

As a matter of theory, the only difference between the old "slavery" and the new "apprenticeship" was that the latter was legally supposed to terminate at the age of twenty-five: as a matter of fact there was often not even this difference. New "apprentice," a Transvaal Milton might have said, was but old "slave" writ large. From the farmer of the lonely Veldt to the President himself, every Boer was an owner of apprentices of this kind. It is very clear that, if the English authorities had thought proper to put forward this breach of the Sand River Convention as an excuse for annexing the Transvaal, they would have had no difficulty in establishing their case, and the Boers might have been deprived, as President Burgers hinted, of one of their strongest claims to the sympathy of one section of public opinion in Great Britain.

But it was not the desire of the English Government to appear to have annexed the Transvaal out of greed for land; and the unprejudiced investigator will, I think, give them credit for being really actuated by the motives which they them-

selves assigned by the mouth of their instrument, Sir Theophilus Shepstone. Amongst the first of these was the weakness of the Government of the Transvaal, which was discredited alike within and without the borders of the State. We have already seen the condition into which the Republic's relations with its native neighbours had drifted. Internal dissensions were also rife.

At the beginning of 1877 there were two parties among the Boers, one inclined to favour the prospect of English domination, headed by Mr. Paul Krüger (the present President), the other, headed by Mr. Burgers, in favour of independence, but not unwilling to join in a South African confederation. Mr. Burgers, at least, felt strongly that the English annexation was aided, if not promoted, by the intrigues of his opponents. "The Boers following Krüger," he wrote, "considered themselves absolved from their obligations to the State under my rule, while the Boers adhering to me did not care to support a State of which Krüger was to become the chief, and so both parties not only refused to pay their war taxes, but also the ordinary nominal tax on land, and other taxes. This soon had its effect, and

when Shepstone came to Pretoria, the Government was already unable to meet any of its money obligations."

Without dwelling longer on this painful state of things, one may remark that Sir Theophilus Shepstone's proclamation, when tested by all the available evidence, seems to have expressed the state of the country with great fairness. All confidence in the stability of the Government, once felt alike by surrounding and distant European communities, had been withdrawn. Commerce was well-nigh destroyed. The country was in a state of bankruptcy. The white inhabitants, discontented with their condition, were divided into factions. The Government had fallen into helpless paralysis, from causes which it was unable to control or counteract. The prospect of the election of a new President, far from allaying anxiety or inspiring hope, was looked forward to by all parties as likely to result in civil war between the partisans of Mr. Krüger and of Mr. Burgers. The helpless condition of the Transvaal afforded a strong temptation to the neighbouring native powers to avenge in blood long years of slave and cattle-stealing, and to wipe out the memory of old

defeats. The successes of the weak Sekukuni had already shaken the prestige of the white man—certainly of the Boer—amongst all the wild races of South Africa. Lastly, the English authorities believed that a large number, if not a majority, of the Boers themselves were eager for annexation as the only road out of their difficulties.

For all these reasons Sir Theophilus Shepstone used the authority which had been vested in him, and hoisted the Union Jack over the Government buildings at Pretoria on the 12th of April, 1877. The Transvaal was to remain a separate Government, with its own laws and legislature, and to enjoy "the fullest legislative privileges compatible with the circumstances of the country and the intelligence of its people." Dutch and English were equally to be the official languages: the laws were, for the present at least, to be unaltered. Equal justice was guaranteed to black and white, but there was no intention to insist on the natives receiving any of the civil rights which had successfully been conferred upon them in the Cape Colony. Here, perhaps, was the only allusion in the proclamation of annexation to those practices of slave-holding and slave-raiding which were a

by-word in the Cape Colony and among the natives at the time. Shepstone's wish, as he said, was not to find fault with the Boers, but to show them their true position.

There can be little doubt, when one has looked into all the complicated history of these transactions, that when England annexed the Transvaal she took the only course that was either politically wise or morally right, in the circumstances. She has often been accused, alike by her enemies and by her own repentant children, of being impelled in this as in other deeds by the simple hunger for more land. It is really unnecessary to drag in that well-worn argument at all in this case. What was the alternative to that interference which the Boers and their officials resent so bitterly to-day? A dozen writers, of the most various views, are united upon this point. If we had stood aloof, the house which was smouldering would have been on fire with a vengeance. It was not in savage human nature to be restrained any longer by mere persuasion and diplomacy, and if we had not annexed the Transvaal no one seems to doubt that Dingaan's massacres of the Boers would have been joyfully repeated by his nephew Cetewayo,

with whom Sekukuni and the other discontented chiefs would gladly have made common cause. The Boers, the Zulus, and the English Government were equally convinced of this at the time.

The Boers, indeed, seem to have thought that they could break the power of Cetewayo as Pretorius had broken that of Dingaan. "What is your strength?" Shepstone asked them. "You have 8,000 white men all told capable of bearing arms. Of these 1,000 live in towns or villages, 350 are a floating population of gold-diggers, and the remaining 6,650 are farmers, scattered widely over a surface of country which in Europe would maintain 25,000,000 of people. Upon these 6,650 farmers is laid the task of supporting the State by the produce of their farms, and upon them also rests the military duty of defending the country or fighting for its rights." Possibly the Boers might have replied that a smaller body of their ancestors had held their own against Dingaan; but the disgraceful episodes of the Sekukuni war were too fresh in their minds. There can be little doubt, I think, that a Zulu invasion would have healed their dissensions and roused their spirit in a way that never could be done by the attack on

Sekukuni—which, as Mr. Krüger observed at the time, had not the blessing of God upon it. The Zulus would again have been repulsed, but probably only after a slaughter which would have christened a new Weenen and a new Hill of Blood. English diplomacy, which has been so freely accused of self-seeking, was not cold-blooded enough to view such a possibility with calmness and inaction. Isandhlwana and Majuba Hill are part of the price that we paid for interfering to save the Boers from their probable and imminent disasters.

However that may be, there can at least be little doubt that, at the time of the annexation, the English authorities had reason sincerely to believe that the Boers were, on the whole, glad to be taken out of their Slough of Despond by the strong hand. The official heads of both parties, it is true, united, in a fashion which reminds one of the remark that the Transvaal is the Ireland of South Africa, to protest against external interference. President Burgers closed his official life with a strong and dignified protest against the English annexation, though its effect was spoilt, to the colonial mind, by his immediate readiness to

accept a pension from the new Government. Messrs. Krüger and Jorissen set to work to collect signatures to a monster petition against annexation, which ultimately became a serious document in the controversy; but the sons of Mr. Krüger were meanwhile said to be foremost in the train of enthusiastic Boers who dragged the carriage of Sir Theophilus Shepstone into Pretoria. And Mr. Burgers admitted that "to draw the sword would be to draw the sword against God"—to contend against Fate, as one of our own statesmen might say.

Even a writer who is so far from being prejudiced in favour of England as to ascribe the annexation solely to her "historical greed of territory" declares that "the Boers did not at that time receive the visitor with other feelings than those of satisfaction, and practically surrendered their country voluntarily and gladly to the rule of a greater power, under the impression that Sir Theophilus Shepstone . . . would carry out the promises he made them." No man, we are assured on all hands, who was living in the Transvaal in 1877 would give a different account of the general feeling. In itself, the statement is the most prob-

able that has been made, when we remember that those who later on backed the movement for independence were chiefly farmers, dwellers in the country, who had no opportunity at first of making their voices heard above the jubilant plaudits of Pretoria.

For a time, at any rate, there was peace, if not satisfaction, in the land. Sekukuni was pacified; Cetewayo was warned off; the finances were disentangled; the domestic feuds were quieted. And, for a few months, it seemed likely to all men that the Transvaal would take a peaceful share, with Natal and the Cape Colony, in bringing about Lord Carnarvon's pet scheme of South Africa united under British rule.

CHAPTER IX

THE GROWTH OF DISCONTENT

To a dispassionate observer, indeed, there was every reason why April 12th, 1877, should have been the beginning of a new and prosperous era for the Transvaal, as a portion of the English dominion at the Cape. The troubles of the Outlanders would then have had no existence, and the history of the gold-fields of the Kaap and the Rand would have been at least as peaceful as that of the diamond mines of Griqualand West. But it was not to be. The hereditary distaste of the descendants of the emigrant Boers for any settled government, and especially for English government, afforded a hot-bed for the seeds of discontent which were artfully sown, from the earliest days of the annexation, by the demagogues who have always thronged the Transvaal. But the chief credit of the brief and tragic end of the English attempt to control the destinies of

the Transvaal must, unfortunately, be laid at the door of the English authorities themselves.

Of the presence of mischievous demagogues in the Transvaal there can be no doubt. All the authorities, from whose conflicting stories one has painfully to disentangle history, agree upon this, though they do not all agree in the motives that they assign to them. A Boer historian declares that the annexation had been "invited by an active discontented party, chiefly foreigners, dwellers in towns, non-producers, place-hunters, deserters, refugees, land speculators, 'development-men,' and pests of Transvaal society generally, who openly preached resistance to the law, refusal to pay taxes, and contempt of the natural and guaranteed owners of the country in which they lived, in the distinctly and often expressed hope that foreign intervention would fill the country with British gold and conduce to their own material prosperity." It is amusing to remember that, according to President Burgers, the leader of this "party of discontent" was Mr. Krüger, that modern embodiment of pious respect for the law and constitution.

Thus there can be little doubt that the Boers in

1878, led away in part by their dislike of "foreigners," in part by their rooted prejudice, as country folk, against people who lived, like most of the English, in towns, took as low a view of the English party as they profess to take of the leaders of the Outlanders in Johannesburg to-day. Mr. Burgers, amongst his other projects, had imported a number of foreigners to aid in the executive work of the Government, some of whom were really excellent men, whilst others were of as low a type as the Amsterdam bookseller to whom reference has already been made. Thus, when the Republic collapsed, there was not a single man in high office who was a native or a genuine Boer of the Transvaal. The true Boers had resented this so strongly that they were doubly opposed to the rule of "outlanders" of any kind.

On the other hand, the English attributed equally bad motives to many of the leaders in the Boer struggle for independence. Amongst the genuine Boers there was a section of "hot-headed, violent fellows, who used every endeavour to excite the people to deeds of violence against the British. . . Krüger, Joubert, Pretorius, and

the moderate men required all the authority they possessed to counteract the influence of this section, which was composed of the most bumptious, bragging, swaggering, bullying crew that could be found in the Transvaal." It is to the Boers of this class that almost all the ill-feeling that has existed for twenty years between England and the Transvaal State is to be attributed. They furnished the expeditions of the filibusters, of whom we shall soon hear; they shot the wounded "redcoats"; they did their best to bring discredit on the Boer name.

But the Outlanders were not all on the side of the English. The Boer writer who has been already quoted, Mr. Aylward, was a firebrand of dubious nationality. If Sir Bartle Frere and the authorities of Scotland Yard are to be believed, he was an Irish Fenian who had turned Queen's Evidence, and so been forced to expatriate himself. Major Le Caron, whose statement may be taken for what it is worth, stated before the Parnell Commission that money was sent by the Irish Secret Societies to help to foster the Transvaal "rebellion." There is nothing unlikely in the story, from what we know of the ways and means

of Irish Secret Societies. Sir Bartle Frere was always convinced of its truth.

That High Commissioner's statement as to the leaders of the Transvaal struggle for independence is worth quoting in this connection.

"The leaders are, with few exceptions," said Sir Bartle Frere in 1879, when he had had many opportunities of making their acquaintance and gauging their character, "men who deserve respect and regard for many valuable and amiable qualities as citizens and subjects. . . The few exceptions are mostly foreign adventurers of various sorts and nations, English, Irish, and Scotch, Jews, Americans, Hollanders, Germans, Belgians, and Portuguese, who, though often well educated and naturally able, are rarely men of high character or disinterested aims. They acquire great influence among the less educated Boers, but foster the tendency to suspicion, which, mixed with extraordinary credulity in many things, is a marked feature in the Boer character, and makes them very difficult to manage by any one who does not possess their entire confidence. They are extremely sensitive to ridicule, and to opprobrious or slanderous imputations, feeling most keenly

unjust charges against their race by any in authority. Hence perhaps they are very liable to be deceived by men who, for their own ends, flatter and pretend to sympathise with them."

It is a disagreeable necessity to have to add that England never succeeded in sending the Boers administrators "who possessed their entire confidence." Sir Theophilus Shepstone, that "Africander Talleyrand, shrewd, observant, silent, self-contained, immobile," rather raised their suspicions than gained their confidence. When the promises which he had made as to complete self-government and permanence of the laws remained obstinately unfulfilled, the Boers who had been most ready to accept English rule felt, with grief but without much surprise, that they had been intentionally duped. They have been accused of ingratitude, of allowing the English to fight their battles and to pay their debts, and then seizing the moment of England's weakness to cast off their allegiance and "shoot the red-coats." It is only fair to state one's conviction, after a careful study of the facts, that the Boers could scarcely be ungrateful, because they had no real cause for gratitude. It is true that we broke the Zulu power;

but the Boers asserted that they could have done it themselves. We saved them from bankruptcy, but we left their debt as large as we found it. And neither of these actions can reasonably be said to outweigh our constant failure to give them a government that they could understand or endure.

This failure was mainly due to ignorance, and to those changes of policy which are inseparable, in our modern colonial system, from Parliamentary government *plus* a telegraph cable. There is a story, told with some authority, that at the time of the Boer war orders were sent to the English Admiral on the African coast, to the effect that he was to invest the capital of the Transvaal, but not to bombard it. If this story is not true, it is at least well invented; for this blunder in geography is only of a piece with the gross ignorance that the home Government constantly displayed, alike of the needs of the Boers and of its own servants' promises. Thus it comes about that the history of the Transvaal during the English occupation is chiefly a history of Boer protests against English misgovernment and broken promises, which one has neither the space nor the patience here to write in detail.

One or two instances are enough to indicate the whole. All who had to do with the administration of the Transvaal, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, Sir Bartle Frere, Sir Garnet Wolseley, Sir Owen Lanyon, seem equally to have misunderstood the nature of the Boer, which is very like that of the Irishman's pig, which was willing to be led but utterly refused to be driven. A high-handed manner was constantly held in the English official dealings with the Boers, which could only have been defended if there had really been force enough to back it; as it was, England showed the iron glove over the velvet hand. From Sir Theophilus Shepstone's polite announcement that taxes must be paid, it was a step of little more than two years to the packed Council and the censorship of the Press which Sir Owen Lanyon found it necessary to introduce.

Every administrator promised, in the name of the Queen, that the Transvaal should receive a full measure of self-government. Two and a half years elapsed, during which the discontent steadily grew both wider and deeper, before Sir Garnet Wolseley proceeded to redeem the pledge by the creation of an Executive Council and a Legislative

Assembly, both to be entirely nominated by the English Government. When Sir Bartle Frere was superseded in his governorship of the Cape Colony, in 1879, he had designed to form a representative Constitution, and had practically received the adhesion to his scheme of Messrs. Krüger and Pretorius, who were recognised as the leaders of the popular party. But Sir Garnet Wolseley destroyed the hopes that had thus been raised, and Sir Owen Lanyon's severe rule at last made the Boer inhabitants of the Transvaal practically unanimous in the not unjustified cry for independence once more.

This crusade had steadily been going forward n the hands of the popular leaders. The protest against the annexation, made when the English flag was first hoisted in Pretoria, had always been kept alive on the Veldt. The town population, which had acquired a strong English element, might be content with the government of the Queen; that was all the more reason for the true Boer to dislike it, with the instinctive opposition that the rustic always has for the urban. A deputation, consisting of Messrs. Krüger and Jorissen, had been sent to England by the Boer Executive Council,

directly after the annexation, in order to protest against it. They had several interviews with Lord Carnarvon, and that statesman was certainly under the impression that he had convinced them of the necessity of the annexation. They assured him, on leaving, of their determination to use their best endeavours to induce their fellow-countrymen cheerfully to accept the new state of things; and of their desire, should they be permitted to do so, to serve her Majesty faithfully in any capacity for which they might be judged eligible. As a matter of fact, Mr. Krüger's salary was raised on his return home, and Dr. Jorissen remained Attorney-General. There is every reason to suppose, that if the Transvaal had been properly governed on the lines laid down in Sir Theophilus Shepstone's proclamation, Mr. Krüger's decision for loyalty would have been that of his fellow-countrymen; at least, until England chose to ask awkward questions about the apprentice system, which must always have been a rock of offence.

It may be remarked at this stage that, if England had taken her stand on the Native Question, she would have had every excuse for ruling the Transvaal by men of the type of Sir Garnet Wolseley

and Sir Owen Lanyon, and holding down her Boer subjects at the point of the bayonet if they protested. It can hardly be denied that the ways of the Boers with the natives, no less than the direct evasion of the anti-slavery provision of the Sand River Convention, would have afforded both a moral and a political justification for annexation and government by the strong hand. But England chose to ignore the slavery question, and to make promises of self-government which were never fulfilled. Thus it is that, when the inevitable rebellion came, one cannot help feeling that the Boers, slave-holders and marauders as they were, were in this instance absolutely in the right. It is not the only time that they have had occasion for gratitude to the folly of those with whom they have come into conflict.

From the return of the first Boer deputation to the earliest appearance of discontent with the English rule, only a very few months elapsed. The English administrator's failure to carry out his promises; the absence of any representative assembly which might serve as a safety-valve for the grumbles of dissatisfaction; and the gradual growth of public opinion amongst the outlying

Boers of the Veldt, all contributed to the disappearance of the original feeling of submission, if not content. At the beginning of 1878 a public meeting was held at which Mr. Krüger, having apparently forgotten Lord Carnarvon's statement that the annexation was irrevocable, assured his countrymen that England would abandon the Transvaal if she were convinced that a majority of the inhabitants wished her to do so. The monster petition, which has already been mentioned, was then formally adopted as the means to independence, and all true Boers were called upon to assist in getting signatures for it. It has been said that threats were held out against all who might refuse to sign; so some loyal Boers complained to the English authorities, but there is no reason to suppose that theirs were other than the isolated cases of excessive zeal which are inseparable from every truly popular movement. At another meeting, held in April of the same year, it was found that 6,591 signatures had been affixed to the petition; and a deputation was again appointed to visit England with it and lay the case before the authorities. The members of the deputation were Messrs. Krüger and Joubert,

who, with Mr. Pretorius, were from this time forward the accepted and recognised leaders in the Boer struggle for independence.

This, the second deputation from the Transvaal, reached England in June, 1878, and was received with politeness by the new Colonial Secretary, and with cordiality by a section of his political opponents. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had taken Lord Carnarvon's place in the Ministry of Lord Beaconsfield, in consequence of that nobleman's disagreement with his colleagues on a detail of the Eastern Question. The new Secretary, whilst he lacked his predecessor's zeal for South African Confederation, was equally firm on the question of the Transvaal. Yet the case which the deputation laid before him was not a weak one, and it was ably put. The delegates of the Boers began by saying that Sir Theophilus Shepstone had annexed their country under the mistaken impression that the majority of the people desired it. The petition for independence which they had brought with them showed that, even if that were so, their countrymen had changed their minds. They showed good reason for this by their contention that the state of the Transvaal had not materially

improved under the English occupation: it was in vain to urge that, in our absence, things might have gone from bad to worse. They declared that the annexation had been a breach of the Sand River Convention, and they wound up by threatening to take to their ox-waggons and to "trek" still further north if their grievances were not redressed.

The answer of the Colonial Secretary was not of a kind to turn away discontent. He declared that Lord Carnarvon had said that, in no circumstances, would the Transvaal be given up; which seems to be the fact, but does not agree with what Mr. Krüger had told his countrymen and was obliged to maintain. But the present government of the Transvaal was, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach admitted, "altogether temporary and provisional"; if the delegates would go home and wait patiently, all their wrongs would be put right in the Government's good time. They replied that, once for all, no reform short of complete independence would now content the Boers; and, although they personally would do their utmost to keep the peace, they could not answer for the consequences of an English refusal of their claim.

On their return to South Africa, towards the end

of 1878, the delegates found that, in their absence, events had ripened the Zulu threats into the promise of imminent war. Mr. Krüger, indeed, had an opportunity of showing that he was anxious to be friendly to England by giving Lord Chelmsford some advice which, if it had been attended to, would have prevented the bloody day of Isandhlwana. "Mr. Krüger," said a witness of the interview, "gave him much valuable information as to Zulu tactics, and impressed upon him the absolute necessity of laagering his waggons every evening, and always at the approach of the enemy. He also urged the necessity of scouting at considerable distances, as the movements of the Zulus were very rapid, mentioning how even he had once been surprised, and was extricated only by severe hand-to-hand fighting inside his laager."

Whilst passing through Natal, the delegates had a much more important interview with Sir Bartle Frere, the High Commissioner. He explained very fully how, although independence was not to be thought of, yet they would be able to enjoy perfect freedom, and self-government in local affairs, as a province of the coming South African Union under the British flag; and that

the form of their provincial government would be fully discussed at his intended visit, when he would give them every opportunity of stating their views and wishes. The delegates respected Sir Bartle Frere, though they did not like him, and they listened to him patiently, although they were already beginning to suspect that English promises to them were worth about as much as their own to the natives. Of Mr. Krüger himself the High Commissioner, according to his biographer, entertained a good opinion, and considered that he conducted affairs on the part of the Transvaal with ability and fairness.

Whatever Sir Bartle Frere may have intended—no reasonable being can doubt that he was absolutely honest and sincere in his promises—he was able to do nothing for the removal of the Boers' just grievances. The outbreak of the Zulu war at the end of 1878, the disasters to the British arms that followed, and the unpopularity that resulted for the High Commissioner, tied his hands until he was practically superseded by Sir Garnet Wolseley. We have already seen what kind of government that gallant soldier thought fit for "the circumstances and the intelligence" of the

Boers. All that Sir Bartle Frere could do was to meet the Boers as he had promised, and, by his personal influence and downright honesty, to persuade them to try the effect of yet another constitutional appeal to England.

This was something of an achievement, for the return of the delegates empty-handed had inflamed passion in the Transvaal to a point which the supposed weakening of England by the unhappy Zulu war did nothing to lower. Many of the younger Boers, that hot-headed section of which I have spoken, were now talking freely of freeing the Republic by force, of pulling down the British flag and driving the Resident across the Border. Cetewayo at least thought it worth while to send envoys to Mr. Krüger to suggest that now was the time for a rising, which he would support to his uttermost. Sir Bartle Frere prevailed upon the moderate party to hold the others back, and promised, in return, to forward their "Petition of Right," in which they solemnly declared that they would be content with nothing less than complete independence on the lines of the Sand River Convention. The answer to this was the appointment of Sir Garnet Wolseley, who, with Colonel

Lanyon, practically subjected the Transvaal to a military rule. He treated it, in fact, as a conquered country. Unfortunately the conquering had yet to be done.

For a year things dragged along without any events of importance. The Boers were gradually becoming more and more exasperated at the conduct of their military governors, with their "tall talk," their declarations that "so long as the sun shone, England would rule the Transvaal," and their readiness to proclaim martial law and talk of hanging "rebels who grumbled." The English inhabitants of the Transvaal towns, it must be added, did all in their power to foment the bad feelings that were arising. "The English inhabitants," we read, "had come to look upon the Boers with increased contempt; their mass meetings and protests were scoffed at by the more ignorant section of the English community as 'gas'; while our troops were in the country, many would no doubt have liked to see an open collision, the result of which they hoped would be to settle this Boer business offhand. The Boers resented bitterly this hostility of the urban element." At a meeting held in Pretoria, in 1879, this feeling came to a head.

In December of that year, a meeting presided over by Mr. Pretorius published a declaration which might have shown how the wind was blowing. The time of memorials to the English Government, this important document said, was over. The Boers could speak no more to England, for there was nobody to answer them. Therefore they proceeded to enact that the people of the South African Republic had never been subjects of Her Majesty, and were determined not to be. They demanded that a Volksraad should be called together, and should make "as peaceful a solution as possible of the difficulty." The six points named in the declaration show the lines on which such a solution might have been offered. They are:—

"(1) That all the rights of the present inhabitants of the country shall stand under the protection of the present laws.

"(2) That to the British Government the right shall be granted to appoint in our country a Consul or diplomatic agent to look after the interests of British subjects.

"(3) That the legal expenditure legally due for the necessary government of the country during the interregnum shall be acknowledged.

"(4) That differences about boundary lines of native tribes shall be submitted to arbitration.

"(5) That the Government is willing to adopt general rules with regard to the native policy, in accordance with the other colonies and states of South Africa.

"(6) That the Republic is willing to enter a confederation in accordance with the other colonies and states of South Africa."

There is nothing very extravagant in this demand, which might still have been conceded with honour. However, the High Commissioner was wedded to a different policy: forgetful of the unfulfilled promises of his predecessors, he publicly described the meeting as one at which "ignorant men, led by a few designing fellows, were talking nonsense and spouting sedition on the High Veldt," and clapped Mr. Pretorius and his Secretary into jail on a charge of high treason. At that moment the die was cast. The Boers were convinced of the folly of attempting to redress any of their grievances in a constitutional manner; and they commenced to lay in supplies of powder and lead, against the day when it should be possible for them to appeal to the God of Battles with a hope of success.

For a moment, indeed, the exigencies of English political life brought the Boers a gleam of hope. The Beaconsfield ministry was drawing to its close; the Opposition were in need of all the capital they could make against the time of the elections; and it happened that the affairs of the Transvaal furnished some counters in the game. In the Queen's Speech of February, 1880, a hint was thrown out that "the powers of self-government already enjoyed by the inhabitants of the Cape Colony" might soon be extended to the Transvaal. Lord Hartington, who was then gallantly leading the Opposition, in the absence of Achilles in his tent, had made himself familiar with the condition of the Boers. In his Speech on the Address, he declared that it was now perfectly clear that the annexation of the Transvaal was a measure adopted by the Government, and sanctioned by the House, under wrong impressions and incorrect information. He pointed out that the Boers had been said to be in favour of the annexation, whereas they now appeared to be opposed to it. "If it be proved," he added, "that it is for the advantage of the district, and for the peace of the whole community of South Africa, that the Transvaal should continue to be governed

by us, by all means let it be so. But if, on the other hand, we find that it would be more advantageous, and more honourable, to restore the former government of that country, then I say that no false notion of dignity ought to stand in the way."

This, it will be seen, was at once a carefully guarded and a statesmanlike declaration, which does credit alike to the prudence and the generosity of Lord Hartington. Unfortunately, the Boers, who were quite convinced as to the "advantageous and honourable" course, forgot to take note of Lord Hartington's conditions. They had much more excuse for the expectations which they built, shortly afterwards, upon the famous Midlothian speeches of Mr. Gladstone. After the dissolution of Parliament, Mr. Gladstone, who had returned to his leadership, said at Peebles, on March 30th, that Cyprus and the Transvaal, Lord Beaconsfield's acquisitions, were worthless; and he added:—"And, moreover, I would say this: that if those acquisitions were as valuable as they are valueless, I would repudiate them, because they are obtained by means dishonourable to the character of our country."

It will be noticed that this is also, in strict grammar, a conditional statement, and that "to repudiate" is not necessarily, in political language, the same thing as "to give up." But the Boers were ignorant enough to base strong hopes on these words, which were sown broadcast over the Transvaal. When Mr. Gladstone was returned to power by a great majority, Messrs. Joubert and Krüger, who had already written to thank him for his noble language, sent him another and more formal letter, part of which has a quite pathetic interest in the light of history. The Boers had determined, indeed, to make no more appeals to England; but now they eagerly changed their plans. "There was and still is," they wrote, "amongst the people a firm belief that truth prevails. They were confident that one day or another, by the mercy of the Lord, the reins of the Imperial Government would be entrusted again to men who look out for the honour and glory of England, not by acts of injustice and crushing force, but by the way of justice and good faith. And indeed their belief has proven to be a good belief."

Mr. Gladstone's reply was, as is well known, that

"it was impossible now to consider the matter as if it were presented for the first time," and that his judgment was that "the Queen could not be advised to relinquish her sovereignty over the Transvaal." The Boers, who were not intimately acquainted with the exigencies of our political system, nor with the verbal logic of Mr. Gladstone, said some very rude things about this method of "repudiation." They could not see how the most noble and disinterested of men might find it necessary for the obtaining of power to make promises which it was equally obligatory on him to break for the preservation of power. They thought that a man who acted thus in his private affairs would be liable to unpleasant consequences. But they were uneducated and narrow-minded men, and had not the gift of giving diplomatic expression to their feelings.

CHAPTER X

THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

A DEEP principle of human nature is indicated in the circumstances in which the Boers actually took up arms for the recovery of their independence. As Byron says:—

> Kill a man's family, and he may brook it;
> But keep your hand out of his breeches' pocket.

To compare small things with great, one may say that the Transvaal War of Independence, like the American Revolution, arose directly out of the attempt to impose an unpopular tax upon people who were already irritated by being governed without representation.

Towards the close of 1880, it seems that, to most observers, the condition of the Transvaal was more peaceful than it had been at any time since the annexation. The Boers, stunned by the strange *volte-face* of Mr. Gladstone, had apparently ceased to murmur against the inevitable. A keen-sighted traveller who wrote in 1880 declared that

"the Boers would not rise against English rule." One who knew the feeling in the neighbouring countries extremely well assures us that "if, three months before the first shot was fired, any one ventured the opinion that the Boers would fight, that man would be regarded as something worse than a simpleton." The Government and the English settlers, who were rapidly increasing in number under the shadow of the English flag, were alike confident that the Boers would limit themselves to protests passed at their much derided meetings. Never was there a greater error; yet it was not inexplicable. The town population, with its strong English element, and its instinctive contempt for the rustic—the complement of the "'eave 'arf a brick at 'im" method of greeting the townsman in our own villages—the urban population was, on the whole, strongly loyal. The malcontent farmers lived far out in the Veldt, were not given to writing to the papers, and had no public representatives to express their feelings. The warnings of Messrs. Krüger, Joubert, and Pretorius fell upon deaf ears, and they had almost ceased to utter them. But their quiet was but the cessation of vapours that precedes the eruption of Vesuvius.

We have already seen that one of the chief difficulties of the South African Republic arose from the rooted disinclination of the average Boer to pay any taxes. The difficulty in taking the Transvaal Census of 1890, because many people thought it was intended to obtain information for the tax-collectors, shows that this characteristic still exists. It was not likely to be less vigorous under the hated English Government. Unfortunately Colonel Lanyon was instructed to press for full payment of taxes, in order that the Transvaal finances might be put on a fair footing. He bettered his instructions by insisting on the payment of all arrears, often dating back to the time of Mr. Burgers. The inefficient way in which accounts had been kept seems to have led to claims in many cases in which nothing, or at least less than was demanded, was owing. All through 1880 this went on; over and over again the badgered Boers openly told the magistrates, "You will drive us to desperation; you will force us to open resistance." Finally the match was laid to the train, and the long accumulated magazine of discontent and indignation took fire.

The Transvaal Hampden was a certain Bezui-

denhout, son of the man whose rebellion had led to the Cape Colony Boer *émeute* of 1815. In November, 1880, he was summoned to Potchefstroom to pay a tax of £27 5*s*., which was, as far as I can find out, about double of what he really owed and offered to pay. His plea was not accepted, and his waggon was attached by the Landdrost. Bezuidenhout had already made himself popular by going to prison rather than pay the fine for having unlicensed gunpowder, and on November 11th, the day fixed for the sale, about a hundred Boers deforced the sheriff and rescued the waggon. The Administrator at once sent a force to arrest the ringleaders in this deed. Three or four hundred armed Boers had assembled to defend them. Mr. Krüger, as head of the moderate party, acted as mediator, and arranged that the Boers should not be molested until after a forthcoming general meeting. This had been fixed for January 8, 1881, which seems to show that the Bezuidenhout affair was not premeditated by the leaders. It was put forward to December 8, and lasted from that day to December 13th, at a village called Paarde Kraal. At that meeting the South African Republic was proclaimed, the Volksraad restored,

and a Triumvirate, consisting of Messrs. Krüger, Joubert, and Pretorius, was appointed to administer provisional government until independence should be assured by arms.

The Boer leaders determined to proclaim their resolve in public on "Dingaan's Day," December 16th, the anniversary of the day on which the Voertrekkers had broken the Zulu power, and so of good omen to the Boer arms. They wrote a letter to Sir Owen Lanyon in which they said:— "We declare in the most solemn manner that we have no desire to shed blood, and that from our side we do not wish for war. It lies in your hands to force us to appeal to arms in self-defence, which God forbid. . . . Should it come so far, we will defend ourselves with a knowledge that we are fighting for the honour of Her Majesty, for we fight for the sanctity of the treaties sworn by her, but broken by her officers." The proclamation accompanying this letter recited all the grievances, and reiterated that the Boers "had never been subjects of Her Majesty, and never would be." Finally, it offered Colonel Lanyon twenty-four hours in which to give up the keys of the Government offices, and declared the country, from De-

cember 16th, to be "in a state of siege and under the provisions of martial law."

In the meantime Sir Owen Lanyon had issued a proclamation warning the "misguided men" who met at Paarde Kraal that they would be punished according to the law. He had also telegraphed to Sir George Colley, who had been appointed in the preceding spring Governor of Natal and High Commissioner for South-Eastern Africa, to send all the available troops to the Transvaal. On the 16th December he issued orders that no armed body of Boers was to be allowed to come within a mile of any town in the province of Pretoria, and that each soldier was to carry from 70 to 100 rounds of ammunition. On the same day hostilities began at Potchefstroom, where a party of Boers insulted the English garrison; a small force was sent to drive the Boers off, and the first shots were fired at it from a Boer ambush. The soldiers replied and wounded one Boer. Potchefstroom was then besieged, and all communication with Pretoria or elsewhere cut off from the garrison.

The news of the outbreak of hostilities and the declaration of the Boer leaders must have reached

Sir Owen Lanyon almost together. They were speedily followed by the news of the worst blow that had befallen English arms since the day of Isandhlwana. The Boers had declared that they would only fight if forced to arms in self-defence. Either this had been an empty phrase, or they interpreted "self-defence" as loosely as was their custom in their wars against the natives, where the rumour of an intention to raid Boer territory was sufficient excuse for the extermination of a tribe. The Boers were to prove themselves brave enemies: they began by showing themselves crafty, if not treacherous foes.

A detachment of the 94th Regiment, some 250 strong, had been stationed at Middleburg, about half-way between Pretoria and Barberton. Sir Owen Lanyon had ordered them up to Pretoria as soon as things began to look threatening. Colonel Anstruther, who was in command, left Middleburg on the 19th December. On the afternoon of the following day he fell into an ambush of Boers whilst crossing a little stream known as Bronkhurst Spruit. The narratives of the incident vary; but it seems to be proved that the Boers sent in a messenger with a flag of

truce to order Colonel Anstruther to retire, and, upon the latter sending a message to the Boer commander that he should march on to Pretoria, they immediately opened fire, before the flag of truce was lowered. They had taken advantage of the interval to take accurate aim at the hated "red coats," and in less than ten minutes half the English force was *hors de combat*, whilst the rest, surrounded and outnumbered, only saved their lives by surrendering. The Boers acknowledged a loss of two killed and five wounded; the English loss was over 200, whilst all the officers were killed or wounded at an early stage of the action—if action it can be called which presented itself to the colonists of the time as a massacre. Bronkhurst Spruit is the one engagement during the war which must be laid to the distinct discredit of the Boers.

It was then that the extraordinary skill of these farmers with the rifle was first seen. The average of five wounds per man which is attributed to the soldiers at Bronkhurst Spruit was hitherto unheard of in warfare. The accurate marksmanship of the Boers has often been commented upon by travellers, and is to be

explained, like that of the ancient Balearic slingers, by the early training given to them. The young Boer was sent out with one or two cartridges, and allowed no food until he came home with his game.

In their War of Independence the rule of the Boers was to begin by picking off all the officers, which to a great extent accounts for the bad behaviour more than once attributed to the English soldiers, who were deprived of all leadership and easily thrown into disorder.

The immediate result of the action of Bronkhurst Spruit was that the small number of English troops in the Transvaal were confined within their walls. Potchefstroom was already besieged ; Pretoria and Standerton, Lydenburg, Wakkerstroom and the other places which had English garrisons were at once invested. Colonel Lanyon was shut up in Pretoria, where he amused himself by composing dispatches reflecting on the morals of the Boers. Many of the sieges produced interesting events, notably the heroic defence of Potchefstroom ; but, as none of them had any effect on the result of the war, I shall say no more about them.

Both Boers and English were aware that

the real business would be entrusted to the forces which were outside the Transvaal at the outbreak of hostilities. The Boers, with considerable military foresight, perceived that the only point of the Transvaal at which an attack was immediately practicable was at its junction with Natal. Sir George Colley was able to muster a force of about 1,400 men of all arms, and rightly determined to march with it to Pretoria, by way of Newcastle and Standerton. Joubert, who was the Boer generalissimo, had placed his chief camp at Coldstream, on the border line between Natal and the Transvaal. Between him and Newcastle the road traversed a path known, from the name of a neighbouring farmer, as Laing's Nek—"Nek" being the Dutch equivalent of the Swiss "Col." The railway line from Durban to Pretoria now runs through the Nek, and the traveller is whirled at thirty miles an hour under the ground that was so freely watered with English blood only fifteen years ago. On the right hand of the Nek, as you look towards Natal, a ridge rises straight up into the frowning precipices of Majuba Hill, whose terraces rise steeply above one another in apparently unclimbable fashion. On

the other hand the same ridge runs to the Buffalo River. The rise to the Nek from the Newcastle side is so gentle that a horse can canter up it; the distance from the top of the Nek to the level ground below is about 500 yards. On either side the hills put out horns towards Newcastle, which offer strong positions for the defenders, as they are very steep and difficult to ascend, especially in wet weather. This, then, was the spot that Joubert wisely chose for his Thermopylæ: his main camp was at Coldstream, but his real fighting line occupied the Nek and the ground immediately behind it, whence it was Sir George Colley's task to drive them out.

The first battle was fought on the 28th January. Sir George Colley delivered an attack upon the steep hills flanking the Nek itself. The attack failed, in consequence of the heavy and terribly accurate fire which the defenders delivered from their strong and sheltered position. The English forces had to draw off, with the loss of nearly 200 men killed and wounded, whereas the Boers, who fought behind shelter, had only twenty-four disabled. It was after this battle that the English learnt that there were two parties among the Boers.

"One party," says a war correspondent, "were insolent, the other showed a very different spirit, deploring the loss of life, but saying they must defend their country. . . . It was the young men —some mere boys of fifteen—who displayed, with pardonable ignorance, bragging insolence. The men of mature years, with very few exceptions, behaved like men, and in the hour of victory in many instances restrained the braggarts from committing cowardly acts."

After this first fight at the Nek, the forces on each side remained where they had been. The Boers had been restrained from invading Natal, if they had ever intended to do that: so, at least, General Colley consoled himself by thinking. On the other hand, the English troops had learnt to think much more highly of their enemy than the "cowardly massacre" (as they called it) of Bronkhurst Spruit had inclined them to do. "Our men," said a letter written at this time from the camp before Laing's Nek, "have learnt now to look upon the Dutchman as a stubborn and determined enemy, brave enough to be worthy of our steel." They were to think still more highly of him before the war was over.

On February 7th the Boers issued their formal "Petition of Rights," a long and argumentative document which took a historical survey of the Boer position, recapitulated the Boer grievances, alike real and imaginary, and concluded with a still bolder demand than had yet been made; nothing less, in short, than "from the Zambesi to Simon's Bay, Africa for the Africanders!" On the next day another battle took place. This time Sir George Colley, instead of attacking the Nek in front, as all military critics think that he ought to have done at first, tried to work round it by the Z-shaped plateau known as the Ingogo Heights. Again the superior marksmanship of the Boers told heavily, and the English troops had to steal back to their camp under cover of night, leaving their wounded at the mercy of the enemy, and barely managing to carry off their guns. The English loss was about 150, with the usual high percentage of officers. The only alleviation to the defeat was that the men had behaved splendidly under fire, and the Boers had not attempted to follow up their advantage.

In the meanwhile, President Brand, of the Orange Free State, had been generously but fruitlessly

offering his services as a mediator for peace. The day before the first fight at Laing's Nek, he prevailed on the High Commissioner to promise that, if armed opposition ceased, such a scheme of local government would be devised as would satisfy all friends of the Transvaal: a repetition of the offers that had been awaiting fulfilment for nearly three years. On the 12th of February, Mr. Krüger wrote again to General Colley, repeating that the Boers had no wish to quarrel with the Imperial Government, but that they "could not do otherwise than offer their last drop of blood for their just rights, as every Englishman would do." He offered to submit the Boer claims to a Royal Commission of inquiry, and to allow all the besieged garrisons to withdraw with the honours of war on such an understanding. General Colley answered this proposal, nine days later, by promising to have such a Commission appointed, if armed opposition ceased; but, as he only gave forty-eight hours for the acceptance of this offer, and it took more than that time for his letter even to reach the Boer leaders, nothing came, or perhaps was expected to come of it.

By this time Sir Evelyn Wood, who was then

second in command in Natal, had come up with reinforcements, which were instrumental in stopping a Boer attempt to out-flank Sir George Colley. The latter commander took the reinforcements, but sent Sir Evelyn Wood back to hurry up more men. It has been supposed that General Colley was nettled at his two defeats, for both of which he had magnanimously, but not unjustly, accepted the entire blame, and that he was determined to beat the Boers single-handed. The Orange Free State, to which some of the Transvaal patriots had appealed for help, was wearing a very menacing look, and it was evident that a decisive blow would have to be struck speedily, or not at all.

Sir George Colley, therefore, resolved to try yet a third method of attack. The Majuba Hill, which has already been described, commanded the back of the Nek, and the whole Boer position. To take artillery or horses up it was impossible, but Gatlings and rocket-tubes could be dragged up on the English side. The Boers, trusting in the difficulty of the ascent, had not occupied the hill. Sir George Colley's plan was to take half his force to the top of this hill, and so render the position of the Boers untenable. On the night of the 26th

February the idea was put into action. A force of 554 rifles—composed of the 58th, the 60th, the 92nd Highlanders, and the Naval Brigade—was led up the back of the Majuba by General Colley. It reached the top in secrecy, and only at dawn did the Boers become aware that the red-coats were two thousand feet above and looking down on them. Some thought of flight; if a frontal attack on the Nek had then been made by the rest of the English force, and if the men on the Majuba had had Gatlings or rockets with which to join in the fray, success would have been practically certain. Whether this would have ended the war is quite another matter; but it would at least have opened up the Transvaal to invasion, and strengthened the hands of the Government to carry on a conflict which, as most people thought, when once begun, should have been fought to the end.

But General Colley's plan was pursued by the usual fate of English dealings with the Boers. He had under-rated his enemy, and had neither ordered a frontal attack by the rest of his force, nor carried up the Gatlings and rockets. Rifles would not carry to the Boer camp from the top of the hill; and Sir George Colley really seems to

have believed that his mere appearance on the top of the Majuba would terrify the Boers into submission or flight. But his opponents took another view of the case. Under Smit, Joubert's second in command, and commonly called "the fighting general," the boldest and youngest of the Boers began to climb the precipitous face of the Majuba, whilst the older men made for positions whence they kept up a terribly accurate long-range fire on everything that showed over the brow of the hill. The slope of the hill was so steep that the English troops could not fire on the assailants without exposing themselves to the more distant sharpshooters. The Boers, who were trained like deerstalkers to take advantage of every inch of cover, climbed the mountain, as Mr. Joubert wrote, "with a courage and energy beyond description." They suffered scarcely any loss, whilst the defenders were falling fast.

Finally the persistent Boers reached the hollow crown of the Majuba, where they engaged the English troops for a short time, at a distance of forty yards. There was an idea of trying the bayonet; but the Boer fire was so deadly that even the Highlanders and sailors could not face it. The English troops,

whose officers fell faster than the men, wavered, then they broke, and in a minute they were all running for life down the side of the mountain that they had painfully climbed less than twelve hours before. General Colley, who could not bring himself to run, was down with a bullet in his brain. The Boers were on the top of the hill, wiping out the insults that the lower kind of English had been heaping on them for years, in the blood of the fleeing red-coats. They had no idea of sparing the vanquished, and more men fell in the flight to cover than in the battle. Even the white flag and the Geneva Red Cross of the ambulance were no protection against the deadly Boer bullets. The total loss to the English force of less than 600 men was 280. The Boers, who were justly proud of the combined bravery and skill which had won them the day, came to believe that they had defeated, if not slain, at least half of the whole British army.

Something must here be said about the Boers' method of fighting. On the one hand, they have been praised as modern Ironsides; on the other, they have been accused of cruelty and of ignoring the conventions of civilised warfare. There is something of the truth in both statements. The fact is that

the Boers are not to be judged as professional soldiers, with a special etiquette and code of honour. The immortal "Gentlemen of the Guard, fire first, if it please you!" would be impossible, and even foolish, to their minds. They are plain, determined, and not very scrupulous farmers, fighting, as they believe, in defence of their lives or liberties, and they take every advantage, short of actual treachery, that seems likely to help them to win. To measure them by the standard of the English Guardsman would be an injustice. Most of their military ideas have been gathered from native wars, and they have imbibed something of the crafty spirit of the Kaffir warrior. Their use of flags of truce, as convenient means of stopping a hot fire for a time, is a sign of this. Their idea of a fight is to do as much harm as possible to the enemy, with as little damage as possible to themselves: it is not a chivalrous view, but it is a highly practical one.

As to their treatment of the wounded, it has to be admitted that some of the younger and less sensible Boers brought grave discredit on their name by such actions as were reported by Colonel Lanyon and others. But it would be unfair to saddle the whole race with their guilt, any more

than with such acts as the murders of Captain Elliot or Mr. Bethell, which were the work of a few of the most worthless Boers. The leaders can only be accused of having failed duly to punish such actions. Both at Bronkhurst Spruit and at Majuba, the field hospital was fired on, and the doctors shot: the Boers' own excuse was that they did not know what the Red Cross flag meant, and thought the ambulance was an ammunition waggon. This curious piece of ignorance is a sample of the Boers' not unnatural carelessness of the whole European code of military etiquette.

Sir Evelyn Wood did his utmost to repair the disaster of Majuba Hill. Public opinion in England was almost unanimous that the Boers must be defeated before terms could be made with them, and Sir Frederick Roberts was dispatched to the scene of action, to do the work. Before he arrived the war was over. General Wood had speedily mustered some 5,000 men, and had prepared to send a force round by Wakkerstroom to outflank the Boers, whilst he attacked the Nek in front. But meanwhile the English Government had remembered Mr. Gladstone's remarks about repudiation. They instructed General Wood, instead of fighting, to make terms

with the successful enemy. An armistice was concluded, and on the 21st of March, 1881, terms of peace were agreed on by General Wood and the Triumvirate, by which England was to evacuate the Transvaal, and restore its independence, subject only to the maintenance of the English right of suzerainty, on terms to be settled by a Royal Commission to the satisfaction of the Boers. The war was over; and England, defeated in three trifling skirmishes, had surrendered to those just claims which she had ignored for two years when they were only urged in peace.

It has been contended that such a conclusion of the war was disgraceful to England. That view was very strongly held by the English settlers in the Transvaal, and by the political opponents of the Government of the day. A resident in Pretoria during the siege has given a lively description of the scene which followed the announcement of the English surrender. "The men hoisted the colours half-mast high. The Union Jack was pulled down and dragged through the mud. The distinctive ribbons worn round the hats of the men as badges were pulled off, and trampled under foot. I saw men crying like children with shame and despair.

Some went raving up and down that they were Englishmen no longer; others, with flushed and indignant faces, declaimed against the treachery which had misled them into a useless sacrifice; while others, again, with stricken and woe-begone faces, sat contemplating their impending ruin, 'refusing to be comforted.'" It was generally felt that, after the English retreat, the country would not be a safe home for English capital, or even for settlers, many of whom gave up their possessions in order to get away.

The truth is that the English dealings with the Transvaal, throughout this period, represent the worst phase of our vacillating Colonial policy; and the "surrender," as it was called, is the only really creditable part of them. Both before and during the annexation promises were made to the Boers, which were steadily broken. When English settlers began to flock to the Transvaal, they did so under the assurance that the English flag would never be pulled down, and this promise was also broken. But the fulfilment of the first promise involved the breaking of the second, which, in the circumstances, should not have been made. No one can doubt that England could ultimately have crushed

the Boer rising, and driven the Boers out of the Transvaal, even if she could not pacify them in it. Let it be counted to her credit that she recognised her errors and yielded, in that most difficult fashion, to a small opponent who had thrice defeated her, just when preparations had at last been properly made to destroy that opponent and his claims together. It is only a very magnanimous or a very cowardly nation that could act thus: I prefer to give my country the benefit of the doubt, and to say that nothing, in England's connection with the Transvaal, became her like the leaving of it. Such, too, was the view of the Boer leaders, who called the peace a "proof of England's noble and magnanimous love of right and justice." Political feelings, perhaps, are still too keen to allow the question to be argued dispassionately. But it seems likely that the historian of the twentieth century, whatever he may add to the secret history of this period, will, on the whol "say ditto to Mr. Krüger" in that.

CHAPTER XI

THE TWO CONVENTIONS AND THEIR SEQUEL, 1881—1886

THE definite settlement of the terms of peace had been left after Majuba to a Royal Commission. Sir Evelyn Wood, who had carried on the negotiations so far, was, of course, appointed a member of this Commission. With him were associated Sir Hercules Robinson and Sir J. H. de Villiers, the Governor and Chief Justice of the Cape Colony. The Commission sat between April and August, hearing the proposals of the Boers and the complaints of the loyalists. Finally it produced the Convention of Pretoria, which was formally signed on 3rd August, 1881, and which, in its attempt to combine Boer independence with British suzerainty, pleased neither party, and was destined to be replaced by the Convention of London in less than three years.

During the sitting of the Commission, the

Transvaal remained nominally in the hands of the English; it was really at the mercy of the Boers, the more reckless and unscrupulous amongst whom took every opportunity of paying off the old scores that had been run up by the loyalists. The Law Courts avoided issuing any process, lest their messenger should be shot in contempt of court. Boers who had been friendly to England were threatened with death. Englishmen who returned to their farms were insulted, and sometimes plundered. Two Bechuana chiefs, Montsioa and Mankoroane, who had offered help to Sir George Colley, were attacked, the loyalists being "commandeered," or pressed into military service against them, according to the familiar practice of the Boers, who consider it excellent policy to make the disaffected fight their battles and save the skins of the good citizens. In short, the whole country was in a state of turmoil and lawlessness, natural enough in the circumstances, which brought the respectable majority of the Boers some discredit by allowing full vent to the wilder spirits amongst them. An attempt was made to bring to justice several men who had been concerned in acts outside the boundary of civilised

warfare, notably in the cold-blooded murder of Captain Elliot; but the trials were farces, as might have been expected, and England did not care to insist in what might have looked like a vindictive course.

In spite of the strong protests of the loyalists, that is to say of the English settlers in the Transvaal, who could not see that their claims were neither so old nor so well founded as those of the Boers who had been the pioneers of the country, the Convention of Pretoria was duly ratified in the course of the following October. It began by defining the Suzerainty as the right to appoint an English Resident, to move troops through the country in time of war, and to conduct the foreign relations of the Transvaal State.[1] This was, of course, only what the Boers themselves had previously offered. A Volksraad was to be elected, and fair compensation to be paid for losses of the loyalists during the war. Several articles followed, which provided for the protection of the natives, and reaffirmed the Sand River Convention clause against slavery. A later article

[1] Lord Kimberley refused to recognise the old name of the South African Republic, chiefly on the ground that it was a misnomer, for there were two Republics in South Africa.

pledged the Transvaal Government to adhere to the boundaries named in the Convention and to do its utmost to restrain its subjects from breaking through them. The commercial rights of England were specially reserved, and the right of European settlers to equal rights with the Boers was established. Such were the provisions of the Pretoria Convention that are chiefly worth recalling at present. Upon its ratification by the English Government and the Boer Volksraad the English troops were finally withdrawn from the Transvaal, and the Transvaal State entered, for the second time, upon an independent existence.

On 8th August, 1881, the Republican flag was hoisted at Pretoria by General Joubert, who made a speech asserting that under it full protection would be given to every one, "whether burgher, foreigner, or Kaffir. Law and order, right and justice," he declared, "was their motto." The Government remained for nearly a year in the hands of the Triumvirate, Messrs. Krüger, Joubert, and Pretorius. These three had carried the war to a triumphant issue, had negotiated and signed the Convention; it was only fair that they should be the first to wield the power which they had re-

covered. At the September meeting of the new Volksraad Mr. Krüger, who was coming to be recognised as the chief statesman of the three, laid down the future policy of the Transvaal State in a long and interesting speech. The chief points worth noticing in it were the desire of the Triumvirate to establish a system of education, and to place the finances of the country on a sound footing. To the latter end they not only desired to modify the system of taxation, but they asked the Volksraad to encourage industry by the grant of certain monopolies. The first of these concessions were issued in 1882, and consisted of the monopoly for the manufacture of spirituous liquors and that for smelting iron. The plan proved immediately profitable, in spite of its economical disadvantages in the long run, and a good deal has been heard of it of late in connection with the railway concession and the dynamite monopoly. The latter was granted in 1888 to Mr. Lippert, for a term of sixteen years, in consideration of a payment of £3,750 *per annum*. It proved to be so profitable that the Government soon resumed it, to their great financial advantage.

But the most important achievement of the new Government of the Transvaal was the re-enactment of a commercial treaty with Portugal, which had been concluded by President Burgers on his visit to Europe in 1875, but which had been allowed to lapse on the annexation. Of still more significance than the treaty itself was the protocol attached to it, by which the Transvaal State and Portugal mutually agreed to aid the construction of the long-talked-of Delagoa Bay Railway, which was now at last to become something more than a dream.

Meantime the internal affairs of the Transvaal were not presenting that picture of sweetness and light which might have been expected after so patriotic a struggle. A quarrel arose between the Hollander party, represented by Dr. Jorissen, who was again Attorney-General, and the Africanders, or native Boers, the result of which was Dr. Jorissen's defeat and forced retirement from public life. Not long afterwards Mr. Pretorius, for whom a quiet life now had greater charms than the cares of office, was pensioned off; Mr. Joubert was made Commandant-General, and Mr. Krüger was elected to the Presidency of the new Republic, a post which he has held ever since.

As the future history of the Transvaal State is to a great extent the history of its President, it will be well here to try and see what kind of man he really is. Perhaps no better sketch of his character can be made than that of Mr. Distant, a clever and clear-sighted naturalist who visited the Transvaal about five years ago. He had many opportunities of judging the President, and here is the view that he took of him.

"President Stephanus Johannes Paulus Krüger was born on the 10th October, 1825, in the district of Colesburg in the Cape Colony, and is without doubt the greatest and most representative man that the Boers have yet produced. Uneducated, or self-educated, he possesses a very large amount of that natural wisdom so often denied to men of great learning and of literary cultivation. With many prejudices he is fearless, stubborn and resolute, and he really understands Englishmen little better than they understand him. In his earlier days he has been a somewhat ardent sportsman and a good shot; he has been engaged and honourably mentioned in most of the Kaffir fights of his time. . . Socially he has always lived in a somewhat humble position, and it is to the

credit of his nature as a man that he bears not the slightest trace of the *parvenu*. Plain and undistinguished in appearance, he combines the advantages of a prodigious memory with a remarkable aptitude for reading his fellow-man, and this last quality would be more valuable were it not leavened by a weakness in resisting flattery and adulation. He is very pious and self-reliant, which is provocative of bigotry and hot temper; and surrounded and approached on all sides by clever and often unscrupulous financiers and speculators, his scutcheon has worn wonderfully well, and his character and reputation passed through many fiery ordeals; he is also a rough diplomatist of no mean rank."

Mr. Krüger is said to resemble the hero of the emigrant farmers, the first Pretorius, in his perseverance and anxiety to improve the condition of the Boers. He has endeared himself to his fellow-countrymen by his possession of all their typical qualities, blended with that easy manner and lack of *hauteur* which the Boer finds so necessary in his rulers. The Boers have a patriarchal form of government, and when they have, or think they have, a grievance, some elders

are deputed to visit Oom Paul, as the President is usually called. President Krüger listens to all they have to say, has a long talk with them, argues the point, hammers in his own convictions with his own private reasons and perhaps a few texts of scripture, and the elders go back satisfied to explain the case to their constituents.

Since the War of Independence, Mr. Krüger's policy has apparently been dominated by zeal for the importance and independence of the State which he governs, coupled with a not unnatural dislike of England and English interference. Thrown by circumstances into one of the most important positions in South Africa, he has shown himself possessed of a singular tenacity of purpose and a remarkable diplomatic skill, which, if allied with breadth of view and enlightenment of aim, would have rendered him a great force in the work of civilising the Dark Continent. As it is, he has proved himself a determined foe to English ideas of progress. Thus he seems to stand in the way of South African Union on the lines of those ideas, which is the present aim of the English party in Cape Colony and the neighbouring lands. Yet his able and consistent, though

narrow, commercial policy has, thanks to the discovery of gold, given his country a greater measure of power and consideration in South African politics than even Mr. Krüger could have dreamed of ten years ago.

It was not long before the Convention of Pretoria began to prove unsatisfactory in working. Indeed, the Boers had only been persuaded to accept the clauses about the Suzerainty and the native question by the efforts of the Triumvirate, who were honestly anxious for peace. It was first infringed in comparatively small matters; the Resident was interfered with, the Queen's name slighted, the style of the country changed from "The Transvaal State" back to "The South African Republic."[1] But it was, as usual, the native question that provoked a serious outburst. It must be confessed that a section of the Boers acted with conspicuous bad faith in this matter; their rulers professed inability to keep them in order.

[1] The Boers themselves argued, not without reason, that "Transvaal" might be a good enough name for Cape colonists to give their country, but that it was obviously absurd for themselves, as the State was "Cisvaal" to those who live in it. But what's in a name?

No section of the Convention had been more clearly expressed than that by which the Triumvirate had bound down their countrymen not to extend the frontiers of the Republic. No section was more speedily and distinctly broken, by one of those filibustering raids for which the outlying Boers have always shown a partiality that can only be checked by force. The history of what have been called the "Robber Republics" of Goshen and Stellaland is full of interest for those who have lately seen the prompt measures which the Boers take to avenge the violation of their frontier by outsiders.

The first native troubles of the new Transvaal State were in connection with the Boers' old foe Sekukuni. This chief, who had been deposed and deported, was restored to his place by the Pretoria Convention. But the land knew him no more, and Sekukuni was speedily killed by his relative Mampoer. The Boers, who had acquired an affection for Sekukuni, threatened to put the murderer to death. He took refuge with a chief called Mapoch, near Middleburg, and the Boers took the opportunity to attack Mapoch, who had always been obnoxious to them. After a war of

nine months, in which the Boers made free use of dynamite, Mapoch and Mampoer were captured and condemned to death, whilst the tribe, 8,000 strong, was distributed as apprentices, under a five years' indenture, amongst the victors.

This was entirely an internal affair. But the story of the "robber republics"—the phrase is Sir Hercules Robinson's—takes us into Bechuanaland. The lands bordering on the Transvaal belonged mainly to two great chiefs, Montsioa and Mankoroane, who had provoked the anger of the Boers by offering help to the English in the war. Two minor chiefs, Massouw and Moshette, were encouraged to rebel against their overlords: a great many Boers turned out as volunteers to help them, with cannon and ammunition. Montsioa and Mankoroane appealed for help to the English, who refused to interfere, except by protesting to the Transvaal Government, who merely denied the accuracy of their information. An attempt to raise volunteers against the Boers at the diamond mines was repressed by means of the Foreign Enlistment Act. The two chiefs, after Mafeking had been bombarded, were compelled to buy peace with large tracts of their land, which were divided

between the Boers and their native allies. The Boers erected their share into two republics, just outside the Transvaal western boundary, which they christened Goshen and Stellaland,[1] and by a part of which the Transvaal State afterwards profited.

Mankoroane and Montsioa continued to appeal to the English Government, which continued to protest against the conduct of the Boer raiders. But Mr. Krüger was on this occasion either unable or unwilling to "damp the trek." By the end of 1882, the English authorities, alike at the Cape and at home, found it difficult to resist the conclusion that "the action of the freebooters had not really been received with much disfavour by the Transvaal Government." Early in 1883, the Boer settlers had formed their two little republics: Stellaland had as its capital the village of Vryburg, now a station on the Bechuanaland railway; whilst Goshen lay on the Transvaal border further to the north. The

[1] That is, Goosen and Stille ("still" or "peaceful") land. But popular etymology soon transformed *stille* to the Latin *stella*, "star," whence "Stellaland," and even "Starland": "because the war between chiefs Massouw and Mankoroane which eventually led to the land becoming inhabited by white people, took place in the year 1882, when the great comet was visible."—A. H. KEANE.

government of each proceeded to issue proclamations "same as a town man." Stellaland adopted a national flag, with a red star on a blue ground, in allusion to the new name, and a "canting" coat of arms; the flag was afterwards presented to Her Majesty.

Whatever the official view might be, it was obvious to the meanest capacity that the Transvaal Government, if it had not in any way assisted the freebooters, had done nothing serious to prevent their open breach of the Pretoria Convention. The English Colonial Secretary had already written to Sir Hercules Robinson that "it was manifest that, if the Transvaal Government was to take advantage of the lawless proceedings of bands of freebooters, many of whom were its own citizens, to extend the boundaries of the State, it was not probable that the disorders would long be confined to the western border." In October, 1883, the new republics agreed to coalesce and form "The United States of Stellaland," with laws and a constitution taken direct from those of the South African Republic. Vryburg was to be the capital. Six months later an English official travelling to report on the propositions then being made for the annexation of

Bechuanaland, found the inhabitants of Stellaland to be "a respectable class, quite equal to the ordinary class of colonial farmers." They had settled down for honest cultivation of the soil, and were not very likely to have moved in direct and conscious opposition to the wishes of the Transvaal Government. Most of them had bought up the farms from the original volunteers or filibusters.

The wilder spirits among these had again diverged to a new Goshen at Rooi Grond, of infamous memory, just outside the new Transvaal border and close to Mafeking. There they lived in a state of internal dissension, varied by inhuman cruelties and barbarous raids upon the natives, which was only closed by the British annexation of Bechuanaland in September, 1885, and the creation of a strong government under which the Stellalanders peaceably merged into English subjects in the Vryburg district, whilst those of the Goshenites who disliked restraint mostly trekked back into the Transvaal.

Those who believe that the Transvaal Government secretly abetted these raids into native territory, attribute them to Mr. Krüger's anti-English policy, which aimed, they say, at stretching a Boer state right across South Africa from the

Portuguese territory on the East coast to the territory annexed by Germany on the West coast, and so at cutting off the English Cape from any direct access to the rich basin of the Zambesi. At present this is no better than a probable conjecture, and the historian has no evidence to counterbalance the strong proclamations which were constantly issued by Mr. Krüger's government against the Bechuanaland raids. In the absence of police or a standing army, it was impossible for the Republic absolutely to prevent these without incurring the risk of a civil war. The free right of trekking had always been the prized heritage of the nomad Boer, and it was hardly to be supposed that a clause which he had never read, in a Convention with a country which he hated, should restrain his movements, even when aided by a proclamation which might, in the absence of newspapers, never have come within his knowledge.

Less than two years had passed since the signing of the Pretoria Convention before it was felt by both the contracting parties that the condition of affairs under it was highly unsatisfactory. The Transvaal Government, who not only had their own grievances but were alarmed at the tone being

assumed by the English authorities in regard to the Bechuanaland raids, made the first move by offering, in June 1883, to send a deputation to England in order to have the whole relations between the two countries thoroughly reconsidered. The offer was accepted; the deputation, consisting of Messrs. Krüger, Smit, and Du Toit, arrived in England in November 1883, General Joubert being left as Acting President of the Transvaal.

The delegates stated their objections to the Pretoria Convention as being, first, that it had been drawn up by a Commission on which they were not represented, and accepted by them as provisional only; second, that it had proved unworkable in practice, especially in regard to its fixing of boundaries, its view of the Transvaal State as a dependent country, and its interference with the native question. They held that the Sand River Convention had never been abrogated, and asked for a new treaty modelled upon it. Lastly, they pointed out that the so-called "raids" had taken place in territory which had once belonged to the Transvaal and which had been taken away at various times by England. This was partly true, and partly based on the untenable

theory that "the district north of the Vaal" included the whole of Africa beyond the latitude of that river. Negotiations went on for nearly four months, and resulted in the signing of the Convention of London on February 27th, 1884 (the anniversary of the fight at Majuba Hill). By it most of the wishes of the Boers were conceded, and the country regained its old name of the South African Republic.

The Convention of London began by defining the boundaries of the South African Republic, in which the most important alteration was the moving of the western border some distance further west, so as to include a goodly portion of the Stellaland territory. "The Government of the South African Republic," said the second article, "will strictly adhere to the boundaries defined in Article I. of this Convention, and will do its utmost to prevent any of its inhabitants from making any encroachments upon lands beyond the said boundaries." The necessity of a British Resident was withdrawn, but the right to appoint a British Consul reserved. The right of Suzerainty was reduced to the following clause:—

"The South African Republic will conclude no

Treaty or engagement with any State or nation other than the Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic, until the same has been approved by Her Majesty the Queen." This implicitly gave the Republic the right of conducting its negotiations with any foreign State through its own agents, subject to the English right of refusing to ratify any Treaty, within six months after its notification. Provision was made for the payment of the debts of the Transvaal State. "No slavery or apprenticeship partaking of slavery" was to be tolerated. No loyalist was to suffer molestation for his share in "the late hostilities." And the last of the important articles provided that "all persons, other than natives, conforming themselves to the laws of the Republic" should have full liberty of entrance, residence, and travel, of land-owning and commerce, and should not be liable "to any taxes, whether general or local, other than those which were or might be imposed upon citizens of the said Republic."

On leaving London, the Boer deputation made a Continental tour, in the course of which they did some important business and received much

welcome as the possible procurers of South African commerce for their various hosts. They first visited Holland, where, as they wrote home, "they were everywhere received with the greatest cordiality, and continued to experience the most indubitable proofs of sympathy and kindness." Both here and in Germany, where the Kaiser and Prince Bismarck, in the first blush of their Colonial policy, showed the Boer leaders marked favour, they were received as brethren and descendants of the Teutonic German-Dutch stock. It is rather curious to consider that in France, which also had an eye to the partition of Africa, special emphasis was laid on the French Huguenot descent of the Boers. Mr. Krüger showed himself quite willing to encourage this racial friendship; but it may be supposed that his preference for France, Germany, and Holland over England is greatly influenced by the fact that those countries have not had so many opportunities for interfering with him. Independence is the sacred ambition of the Boer; all means are good that help him to preserve it; and any attempt at a Continental protectorate over the Transvaal would be as keenly resented as another English annexation.

On the return of the delegates to the Transvaal, they met with a condition of affairs that must have been an unpleasant change from the honeyed words of their Continental kinsmen and acquaintances. The disturbances on the western border had rather increased than diminished after the signing of the Convention, of which it is quite possible that the nomads had never heard. Very shortly after the President's return, high words on this subject arose between him and General Joubert in the Volksraad. Mr. Joubert resigned all his offices, after formulating "a long and trenchant indictment against the Transvaal," and charging the policy of the President with all the mischief that had lately taken place and "the present bad condition of the country." A vehement discussion was followed by the acceptance of Mr. Joubert's resignation and a triumph for the President, who "maintained his predominance in the Raad." But from that time is to be traced the commencement of a split between President Krüger, who has taken the majority of the Boers with him in his anti-English and retrogressive policy, and Mr. Joubert, who has headed a steadily growing minority of the more educated Boers in favour of constitutional reforms

and a policy in conformity with that of the English South African States.

For the moment, however, it seemed as if Mr. Krüger had but obtained a Pyrrhic victory. The constant disinclination of the Boer to pay taxes was intensified by these dissensions, as it had before been by the factions of Mr. Krüger and President Burgers in 1877. The vigour of the State was testified, indeed, by yet another of those outbursts of nomad Boers, under the stimulus of the "land-hunger," which have been so frequent in its history. This took place in Zululand, where there was at the time no paramount power; by the usual steps of independent enterprise, Government disavowal, establishment of a republic, and union with the mother-state, the Transvaal was enriched by the best part of Zululand. This New Republic was recognised as an independent Boer state in 1886, and fell into the capacious bosom of the South African Republic a year later.

But in the early part of 1885 it looked to most observers as if the close of the Burgers period was to repeat itself. Bankruptcy stared Mr. Krüger and his Hollander officials in the face. A loan of £5,000 had to be raised, at heavy interest, to supply

ready money for the immediate needs of the Government. "The salary of the officials fell into arrear; the Treasury was behind with other payments; the farmers could get nothing for their produce; and the mutterings of discontent were growing louder every day." At this moment an event took place which at once raised the South African Republic out of its difficulties, and whose consequences have given it the most important place, at present, amongst the states of South Africa.

This was the discovery of gold in vast quantities, first on the Kaap and then on the Witwatersrand. From that event dates the modern history of the Transvaal. Hitherto it had been an agricultural and pastoral community, almost devoid of external relations, and asking nothing so much as to be let alone. It was now involuntarily to become one of the chief gold-producing countries of the world, and to prove the arena of a complex and increasingly bitter struggle between the isolation-policy of the old Boers and the wider views that were, on the whole, characteristic of the great army of Outlanders speedily attracted to the gold-fields.

CHAPTER XII

THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD

FROM the earliest times, men have agreed, with Ancient Pistol, to couple "Africa and Golden Joys" in their dreams. It has long been supposed that King Solomon's Ophir may have been situated somewhere in that Dark Continent. The early geographers, like Milton, connected it with the fabulous empire of Monomotapa, the African El Dorado, rumours of whose wealth incited even the indolent Portuguese to unwonted explorations. They sought diligently for the places where they might find sunny fountains rolling down their golden sand, as the hymn puts it. Apparently they tried diggings as well as alluvial washings, for both in the Transvaal and in Mashonaland the gold-miners of to-day come on many traces of their forgotten predecessors, who may have been either Phœnicians on Solomon's business or Portuguese on their own. The ruins of Zimbabyé

bear witness to the existence of a comparatively civilised power in the regions south of the Zambesi at a time before the dawn of history in South Africa, and there is similar evidence in favour of the earlier gold-miners. They included the Transvaal as well as the country north of the Limpopo in their search. Modern miners have frequently come upon "the remains of old workings, showing that, centuries ago, mining was practised on a most extensive scale, that vast quantities of ore had been worked, and that by engineers of a very high order."

The modern discovery of gold in the Transvaal, however, was a quite independent affair. It had long been known, indeed, that the natives were in possession of small quantities of gold, which they probably found in the rivers. But the real history of South African gold-fields is wholly a matter of the last fifty years. At the beginning of the present century a Dutch physician found gold in the Cape Colony. "In 1845 von Buch, the great German geologist, asserted that, from his observation, there was a great resemblance between the geological formation of South Africa and that of Australia and of the gold-bearing strata in the two lands. In 1864, Carl Mauch, a

German mineralogist, made a tour across the Matabele country, and discovered the Tati gold fields; and in 1869 Baines and Nelson, the latter a Swedish mineralogist, who had worked for many years in California, found the more remote Mashona gold-fields." The Transvaal, in fact, was shown to be belted by a ring of the metal for which men do so much and go so far.

In the meantime there is some reason to believe that gold had also been found on the site of the modern Johannesburg. It is stated that one Marais, in 1854, "went to work here at some spots which resembled the soil in the Australian diggings, and really succeeded in finding what he sought." Gold thus found was actually on view at the Court House at Potchefstroom. But the Boers did not want gold at that time. They had spent twenty years in getting out of reach of the English Government, and they knew what a potent bait gold would be for bringing it on their traces once more. So they hushed up the tale and passed laws to stop all further prospecting: otherwise there might never have been a South African Republic at all. Up to 1868 this state of things lasted. "In that year, in consequence of

the successive discoveries of auriferous quartz-veins and alluvial deposits, President Pretorius . . . impelled by the growing poverty of the State, succeeded in effecting the repeal of the laws against prospecting, and rewards were even offered for the discovery of payable gold. In the following year Mr. Edward Button of Natal, accompanied by an Australian miner named Sutherland, explored the districts of Lydenburg and Zoutpansberg, on the north-east of the Transvaal, and found gold in several places. In 1871 a mining commissioner was appointed in Zoutpansberg, and the first gold law was passed by the Volksraad.

Mining was speedily begun in the Lydenburg district, and a floating population of from 500 to 1,000 white men have been fairly continuously at work there ever since. These were the first of the Outlanders who have bulked so largely of late in the public mind: their nationality was mainly Anglo-Saxon, and President Burgers even christened one of the earliest fields the "Mac-Mac," because he found so many Scotsmen on it. According to Mr. Aylward, these so-called "gold-fields" did rather harm than good to the Transvaal; they attracted an unsatisfactory class of settlers; they

led indirectly to the Sekukuni war and so to the English annexation, and they were no richer in gold, he said, than Wicklow or Sutherlandshire. There may be some truth in the former views, but as nuggets weighing over 200 ounces were found, and something like a million sterling of gold must, at the lowest estimate, have been found between 1870 and 1890, the mines cannot be said to have been an entire failure. But they certainly did nothing to reconcile the average Boer to the desirability of gold-mining on his territory. He still held, with Mr. Froude, that diamonds and gold were not the stuff of which nations were made. It might have been all the better for him if his Government had stuck staunchly to this decision, and continued sternly to forbid gold-mining within the Transvaal.

In 1875 gold was found in some quantities on the slopes of the Drakenberg, to the south of the Lydenburg fields. No notice was taken of the discovery until after the war. But in 1882 there was a great rush to this district, which was christened De Kaap, from the lofty headland overlooking it, in which the last slopes of the Drakenberg descend to the bush veldt. Soon

several hundreds of men, the majority of them Boers, were on the spot, and they speedily cleared off all the gold that was lying about the surface, Then came a time of depression. Untold wealth was lying under the feet of the new comers, but for some time it did not occur to them to look for it anywhere but in the rivers, which were already exhausted. The result was that most of the diggers lost both time and money over their work. It has been calculated that the alluvial gold found at the Kaap in these first years cost, on the average, not less than £10 per ounce. In 1884 systematic mining had commenced, and proved fairly successful on the land of Mr. Moodie. In the following year the diggers struck reefs of immense and unexpected richness in gold-bearing quartz, chief among which was the famous Sheba Mine. Where there had been a few tents and shanties in 1883 the town of Barberton sprang up, and speedily acquired a population of 5,000. It would without doubt have grown still larger, but for the appearance of a still more attractive rival elsewhere.

The early discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand had been effectually hushed up. Just thirty years after the original date of it, a labourer named

Arnold, or a prospector named Struben—accounts vary—discovered a vein of quartz, extremely rich in gold, upon the Rand. Mr. Struben and his brother bought the farm where it lay, set up machinery, and found the "Confidence Reef," as they called it, to give over 900 ounces of gold to the ton. But it speedily gave out. While seeking to recover it, Mr. Struben says that he thought of trying whether the beds of conglomerates which occur so freely in the Rand contained any gold. These conglomerates consist of water-worn and rounded quartz pebbles, varying in size from peas to hen's eggs, embedded in a sandy or quarzite matrix; the Dutch name for them is "banket," or "almond-rock," from their resemblance to that agreeable sweetmeat. Sure enough, the conglomerates did contain workable gold, and that in such quantities that it has been predicted by men who ought to know that, by the end of the century, their annual output will be not less than twenty millions worth of gold. For it is in this "banket" that the wealth of the Rand consists, and from the proclamation of the Rand gold-field, on July 18th, 1886, date the recent prosperity and the modern history of the Transvaal.

Before this discovery, "the properties on the

Rand were of comparatively little value. The farms were bare pasture land, ranging in price from £350 to £750, and a sum of £10,000 would have sufficed to purchase them all." It is needless to say that they rapidly went up in price, and some of the Boer owners are officially stated to have got as much as £70,000 for a farm situated on the line of the main reef. There was a general rush to the Rand; capitalists came from Kimberley, miners from Barberton, the needy, the greedy, and the enthusiastic from all the ends of the earth.

There is a story of the most famous editor of *The Scotsman* which seems aplicable to the Boer policy on this occasion. A certain public man came to Mr. Russel for advice. He had been given to understand that his supporters were preparing a testimonial to him, in the shape of money, and he could not decide whether his influence would be injured by his accepting it, as he wished to do. "The matter's simple enough," said Mr. Russel: "if it's £5,000, take it; if it's less, refuse it; and say you wouldn't have taken it though it had been *fifty* thousand!" So the Boers, who had hitherto been dead against gold-mines, could not resist the bait of the rich

"banket," coupled with the pressure of approaching bankruptcy. There are many instances to show that the dislike of the Government to mining was a faithful reflection of the popular feeling. Mr. Froude's story has already been told. Another, which has the authority of the late Secretary of the Transvaal Government, is related by Mr. Carter. "As an instance of the indifference of the Boers to the precious metal," says Mr. Carter, "Mr. Bok told me that a Boer who had payable gold on his farm made him (Mr. Bok) take an oath that he would not divulge the fact, for fear that diggers and others should be attracted to the spot and be a source of annoyance to the owner of the farm." The Boer feeling was exactly akin to that of a well-to-do English squire who might be asked to consent to the opening of a coal-mine on his lawn. The laws against prospecting had been drafted in this spirit, and the example of Lydenburg was not encouraging.

However, Mr. Krüger now showed himself amenable to enterprising reason, and signified his intention of encouraging the mining industry. He sent an expert to examine the Rand, and proclaimed it as a gold-field on his report. On the

20th of September, 1886, the Government decided to mark off a township. They advertised the plan, appointed a Mining Commissioner, and held a sale of building sites, or "stands," which brought in no less than £13,000, more than the previous value of the whole of the Rand. The new town, which was named Johannesburg, was thus practically founded on the 8th of December, 1886. It has had a lively history in its ten years of existence. In January and April, 1887, the Government held other sales of sites, which realised nearly £40,000; the new industry had already increased their revenue by 25 per cent., quite apart from the sale of licenses to diggers. So far, their new policy seemed to be justified by its fruits.

It is no part of my plan to go into the history of the Rand gold-mines, and the hundreds of companies that have been formed to work them or to speculate in them. It is enough to say that the excess of speculation in the first two years of the Johannesburg "boom," brought about what, in the pretty language of the Stock Exchange, is called a "slump." Thousands of Outlanders were ruined and had to leave the country; thousands more had

to abandon their dreams of snatching wealth in an instant, and became content to extract it with comparative slowness from their mines. It is disputed whether this collapse did Johannesburg good, as an advertisement, or harm, as a danger-signal to investors. It certainly led to an epoch of healthy work, which had been rather neglected. In the last five years a real town has been built, with pretensions to both solidity and beauty. It is the centre of the English life of the Transvaal. In 1889 its population was officially estimated at 30,000, with a floating population of 100,000 on the Rand. When the census of 1890 was taken the white population of Johannesburg was said to have fallen to 10,000, but this was probably an under-estimate; the best authorities put it at 15,000, with 30,000 on the Rand. Probably the estimate of 1889 had been much too large; but there had certainly also been a real decrease during the collapse. In 1893 the population of the town was given as 40,000 and that of the Rand as 30,000; and in 1895 the trustworthy *Statesman's Year Book* gives 60,000 white inhabitants to Johannesburg, and 45,000 to the Rand. But it must be borne in mind that no statistics as to the

Transvaal population can as yet be called accurate.

However speculators may have exaggerated or obscured the true state of things, there can be no doubt that the Rand gold-mines have been, financially, a great success. The Transvaal has taken its place third on the list of the gold-producing countries of the world, and there seems to be a fair probability that it will even improve its position. The annual output of gold rose from a million and a half sterling in 1889 to more than seven millions and a half in 1894, a total which was bettered by the production of more than five millions worth of gold in the first half of 1895. There is something appalling to the mind and fatal to one's style in the contemplation of these sums, and perhaps the best way will be to exhibit the growth of the gold production in the form of a table. I calculate it, for convenience, in thousands of ounces and in thousands of pounds sterling—in each case to the nearest thousand. The Rand, it will be seen, is responsible for a very large proportion of the whole, though of late years the Kaap is coming to the front.

THE OUTPUT OF GOLD FROM 1888 TO 1895.

Year.	Total Output of the Transvaal.		Output of the Rand.	
	1000 oz.	£1000 stg.	1000 oz.	£1000 stg.
1888			231	807
1889	421	1474	382	1338
1890		1852 (Export through Natal and Cape Colony)	492	1730
1891	834	2918	729	2552
1892	1325	4639	1211	4298
1893	1610	5636	1478	5187
1894	2240	7667	1950	6718
1895	1647 (6 months)	5483	1517 (8 months)	5308

Whilst we are upon statistics it may be as well to exhibit the influence of the gold-mines upon the Transvaal finances. Here then is a table of the Revenue and Expenditure of the South African Republic for the last eleven years, again given in thousands of pounds and to the nearest thousand.

Year	1882–3	1883–4	1884–5	1885–6	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95 half year
Revenue	177	143	161	192	668	884	1577	1229	967	1255	1703	2248	1473
Expenditure	114	184	184	214	621	770	1226	1531	1350	1189	1302	1735	971

The credit balance on June 30, 1895 was £883,000.

Let us look at this instructive state of things more closely. In 1884 the South African Republic was again practically bankrupt. It owed a sum of £396,000, which was just covered by the State lands, valued at £400,000. Its revenue was £23,000 less than its expenditure, and, while the latter could not be curtailed, the former was steadily shrinking, in virtue of the Boer's disinclination to pay his taxes. In twelve years the discovery of gold has increased the revenue fifteenfold, it has made the State solvent and even plethoric of money, and placed its credit in so good a position that a national debt of £2,704,000 has no terrors for the Boers: indeed, when Messrs. Rothschild undertook to negotiate the railway loan of 2½ millions in 1892, it was subscribed twenty times over. It was a grateful sense of this that led President Krüger to declare before

the Volksraad in 1888 that the existence of the country was bound up in that of the gold-fields. No one, indeed, can doubt that the development of these has been the sole cause of the present prosperity of the Transvaal. There is a certain poetic justice in the fact that, coupled with the Boers' political timidity, it has also brought many internal troubles on the Republic.

CHAPTER XIII

THE INCURSION OF OUTLANDERS

AMONGST the inevitable consequences of the discovery of gold in the Transvaal and the Government's decision to allow it to be worked, was the speedy development of a railway policy. A new political departure dates from the close relations into which this was bound to bring the South African Republic with its neighbours. We have already seen that the construction of railways and the consequent development of commerce had fomed part of the advanced policy of the unfortunate President Burgers. The march of events now compelled President Krüger unwillingly to take up his predecessor's half-formed plan. It was the Delagoa Bay Railway, as being remote from English territory, which appealed most strongly to his anti-English policy.

The treaty with Portugal, which had been concluded in 1875 and reaffirmed in 1882, had provided specially for the construction of this line. In 1883

Portugal granted a concession, and in 1887 a Company was formed by an American, Colonel McMurdo, to construct the line from Delagoa Bay to the Transvaal border. The work was hurried on, and the line (52 miles in length) was opened in November, 1888. In the meantime it had been seized by the Portuguese Government, on a colourable pretext. Colonel McMurdo offered to carry the work on to Pretoria, but the President, who had already decided to grant the railway monopoly in the Transvaal to the Netherlands Railway Company, would not hear of this. Public feeling among the Boers was divided on the subject. A petition was presented to the Volksraad by the more enlightened section, asking that the monopoly granted to the Netherlands Company should be withdrawn, as being detrimental to the best interests of the country. General Joubert, who was in favour of free trade in railway enterprise, said that "he would be prepared at any time to prove in argument that railways were necessary, and that more harm would be done to the country by a railway from Delagoa Bay to Pretoria than by a railway from the Colony to this place." He was prepared to support railways in general, and not wait for the Delagoa Bay line.

In the same discussion, held during the session of 1888 on the construction of a steam tramway between the Rand and the coal-fields, the President said that "if a tramway was not soon constructed for the transport of coal, the gold-fields would be 'done for,' and with the gold-fields the country; coal was then at 17*s.* a bag." Other members said that the Raad was starving the cow and yet expecting milk, and there was a general agreement that the interests of the gold-fields were the interests of the country.

The "steam tramway" in question was therefore proceeded with, and was the first railway actually opened in the Transvaal. For two years the Delagoa Bay scheme hung fire. Meantime the President was carrying on negotiations with the Orange Free State, to prevent the extension of the Cape railways through its territories. In this plan he was not successful, although the Free State was prepared to show itself friendly in every other way. The possibility of famine among the crowded population of the Rand, and the great disadvantages caused to the gold-mining industry by the absence of speedy means of communication, finally roused the Government to

action, and by the beginning of 1890 the Delagoa Bay line had entered the Transvaal. Its construction went steadily on, and on January 1, 1895, it was opened as far as Pretoria. In the meantime the Natal Railway and the Cape Town Railway through the Free State had been pushed on. In September, 1892, the Bloemfontein line reached the Rand, which was thus at last put in regular and swift communication with the sea and the markets of the world. This line was before long extended to Pretoria, whilst it united at Germiston with the line that ran east and west along the Rand, and through Johannesburg, which is now (1896) in direct communication with Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban, and Delagoa Bay.

The general railway policy of the Transvaal Government has been simple and consistent. Railways were only admitted to the Republic as a necessary evil. Everything has since been done to encourage the one which goes to Delagoa Bay, because it lies outside of English territory. The famous Drifts Question affords a proof of this. In the course of 1895 the Netherlands Railway Company tried to block the Cape lines to the

Rand by refusing to take goods waggons, which accumulated until they caused a complete block on the lines. An enterprising person then organised an ox-waggon service, which was to carry goods across the Vaal River and on, forty-five miles, to Johannesburg in competition with the railway. President Krüger at once issued a Proclamation closing the *drifts*, or ferries, to all traffic; and as there are no bridges across the Vaal, except those of the railway, the Netherlands Company would have been completely successful if the English Government had not insisted on the drifts being opened again, on the ground that their closing was a distinct breach of the London Convention.

Mr. Krüger's policy, in short, is to send all the traffic of the Transvaal by the Portuguese port, and so to deprive the English colonies of the customs dues and the railway rates on the commerce of Johannesburg, which is at present by far the most important commercial centre in South Africa. From the Boer point of view, it cannot be denied that he is perfectly within his right in pursuing such a policy. The high Protective tariff adopted in 1892 against the Cape Colony and Natal, no less than the differential rates of the

Transvaal railways, are all part of this vigorous and threatening crusade against the prosperity of the English South African colonies.

There has been no other event comparable in importance with the Outlander question in the recent history of the South African Republic. Perhaps the most significant fact of late years is that some attention has been given to the needs of education. In 1894 a sum of £33,000 was devoted to this object, and 6,691 pupils were being educated in over 400 State schools. This gives much hope for the future to those whc worship at the shrine of our "latest English god," Education.

In 1890 the area of the Republic was supposed to be 122,000 square miles. A better survey in the following year showed that this was an over-estimate by about 8,000 square miles. In 1893 a large slice of Swazieland, which had already been claimed by the Boers in 1890, was annexed to the Republic, and raised its total area to 119,000 square miles. During the years 1890 and 1891 the nomad Boers entertained designs of adding still further to the territory of the Republic, in the fashion of the freebooters of Stellaland and Goshen. They had long cast eyes of desire on

the fertile lands north of the Limpopo, where the fear of the savage Lobengula had acted as an effectual barrier. Now Lobengula's power was being replaced by that of the British South Africa Company, formed in 1889, and the Boers, actuated by their ever recurrent "earth-hunger," proposed to make a great trek into the south-eastern portion of Matabeleland. As many as 5,000 Boers were said to be prepared to join this trek. But the Transvaal was no longer as secluded as it had been in the Stellaland days. English railways and telegraphs served to keep it in touch with the outside world. Thus the English Government made a strong and timely protest against such a breach of the London Convention: this time President Krüger was able effectually to "damp the trek," and not more than a hundred roving Boers crossed the Limpopo, to be promptly turned back by Dr. Jameson, who, with a strong force of police, averted any evil consequences from this raid. Most of the Boers returned to the Transvaal: a few remained as settlers.

In 1894 there was a small native war with a chief named Malaboch. The most important result of it was to bring certain grievances of the

Outlanders to a head. Many of them were "commandeered," or pressed into military service. They protested on the ground that they had no political rights in the State, and so could not legally be asked to fight for it. Five of them went to prison rather than submit: an appeal was made to Lord Rosebery, then Prime Minister, and the Boers grudgingly gave way.

But the most important and interesting effect of the discovery of gold upon the South African Republic is to be looked for in the influx of an alien population and the vexed political questions to which that has given rise. There is no means of knowing with entire certainty what was the population of the Transvaal at the conclusion of the English annexation, but it may be safely reckoned at about 50,000 whites, of whom all but a very insignificant proportion were Boers, with from half-a-million to a million natives. In 1887 a fairly trustworthy estimate put the population at 50,000 Africanders (or white persons born in Africa), 25,000 Europeans, of whom the majority were English, and from 300,000 to 750,000 natives. At the end of 1888 the white population was said to have increased to 150,000, of whom not less

than half were English. In 1889 the *Statesman's Year Book* gives the population as 62,000 Boers, 48,000 Outlanders, and half-a-million natives; but this hardly harmonises with the contemporary estimate of 130,000 white persons on the Rand alone, which must surely have been an exaggeration.

In April, 1890, the first Transvaal census was taken. The general feeling that this was a device to facilitate the work of the tax-collector, and the carelessness of the Outlanders about any Government affair, combined to make it extremely inadequate. It gave the population as 66,000 men and 53,000 women: 104,000 Africanders and 15,000 Outlanders. At the same time the white population of the Rand alone, of whom the majority must have been aliens, was estimated at 45,000. The safest of all guides in this matter is a calculation made by Sir Jacobus de Wet at the end of 1894. He concluded that the Transvaal then contained about 71,000 Boers, 63,000 British subjects, and 16,000 other aliens. It is impossible to get nearer the present truth, but this estimate is probably too small.

Two things, at least, are clear from this brief

inquiry. On the one hand, the estimates of the population of the Transvaal have always been very loose. On the other, it is fairly certain that the number of Outlanders in the Transvaal to-day is greater than that of the native Boers. This conclusion is emphasised by the fact that the proportion of men to women and adults to children among the Outlanders is naturally considerably higher than among the Boers. The Government's policy for the last ten years has been dictated by a prescience of this fact.

The Boer, as it has been shown, is as jealous of his political independence as the Yankee or the Swiss. He foresaw that, if the growing crowds of Outlanders were admitted to political rights in the State in which they had come to dwell for a time or altogether, it would be quite conceivable that they should become a majority and get the full control of the Republic into their hands, when their English blood and habits would lead them, not only into the possible heresy of extending political rights to the natives, but into certain union with the other South African States, under the feared and hated flag of England. Consequently the Boers adopted the course of keeping

all real political power from the Outlanders, in a fashion which grew steadily stricter as their numbers increased.

A great deal of abuse has been heaped upon the Boers for adopting this policy. One can hardly see that it is justified. It seems, indeed, that they adopted a course which was predestined to ultimate failure. The logic of facts, of the geographical situation, of the steady influx of Outlanders, forces one to the conclusion that the Transvaal must in the end cast in its lot with a united South Africa, and no patriotic Englishman can refuse to hope and believe that it will do so under the English flag. But our enlightened colonial policy of to-day is a plant of very recent growth. The Boers had had many opportunities of studying the rank and bitter weeds that had usurped its place in the Middle Victorian period. Is it surprising that they took all the measures in their power to ward off the inevitable destiny?

If, indeed, the Boers of the Transvaal had been quite faithful to their old ideas, and had refused to permit gold-mining at all within their territory, they would have deserved far more sympathy to-day. As honest rustics who objected to urban

civilisation and the many evils and uglinesses that come, with much good, in its train, they would have held a perfectly defensible position; and, whilst they might have had something to fear from gold-hunting filibusters, they would at least have had no Outlander difficulty. Such purely agricultural settlers as might have entered the Transvaal would have readily fallen in with the Boer policy. But the Transvaal Government was driven by the fear of imminent bankruptcy into a compromise, which has proved unworkable. Happily it is not yet too late for the Boers frankly to face the position, and, by granting all genuine settlers a fair chance of sharing their political rights, to pave the way to the Transvaal's entrance into the South African Union with an entire retention of that local independence which the Boer has always prized above all else.

CHAPTER XIV

THE STRUGGLE FOR REFORM

THE time has not yet come to write the history of the Outlanders' struggle for political rights in the South African Republic. Indeed, only the first act in that drama had yet been played, when its striking close suddenly called the attention of all Europe to the theatre of action. To change the metaphor, it may be said that many threads that have not hitherto come into sight are here woven into the complex fabric; all of them are intricately ravelled, and the ends of most are still attached to the shuttle of Fate. The utmost that can at present be done by one who is not a partisan is to present a brief and colourless view of that policy of Mr. Krüger which has led up to the present position and the Outlanders' discontent.

Before the arrival of the Outlanders, there had never been any particular debates upon the Transvaal Constitution, which was about as pure

and as fortuitous a democracy as existed anywhere in the world. The Executive Government consisted of the President, elected for a term of five years by all the burghers, with a council of three official members, the State Secretary, the Commandant-General, and the Secretary, and three non-official members, elected by the Volksraad. The Legislative Authority had been from the earliest times—from the Thirty-three Articles, indeed, of 1849—in the hands of a popularly elected Volksraad (a Folkmote, as Mr. Freeman would say). Originally the Volksraad had consisted of twenty-four members, but the accession of territory and other causes had swollen its numbers, by the year 1887, to more than forty. A law passed in 1882 had provided that only burghers of the Republic might vote in the election of the Volksraad or be chosen to sit in it. Burghers were understood to be the original trekkers and their descendants, or, generally, all men who had been born in the Transvaal of white parents. But the Boers were not then unwilling to grant citizenship to new-comers, and the same law provided that strangers settling in the Transvaal might be naturalised and become fully qualified burghers

upon the production of a certificate of five years' residence, during which they had paid the taxes and obeyed the laws of the Republic. This process, which was quite satisfactory to a farmer who might cast in his lot with the South African Republic, was too slow to satisfy the impatient gold-miners, who soon began to suspect that they were regarded simply in the light of milch cows by the Government, and to raise the ancient Anglo-Saxon cry of "no taxation without representation."

For a time the Outlanders, who had, indeed, no proper organisation, endured what they held to be their wrongs in silence. Perhaps they remembered that the Boer system of naturalisation was, on the whole, less onerous than that in force in Great Britain, and not harsher than that of the United States. In July, 1887, the Volksraad passed an Act amending the Constitution in a fashion which slightly increased the difficulties of becoming a burgher. By this Act the number of the Volksraad was fixed at thirty-nine members, who were elected for four years, one half retiring every two years. The franchise was bestowed upon (*a*) burghers by birth, (*b*) Outlanders who had resided five years in the Transvaal, taken the oath of

allegiance and paid a fee of £25. Members of the Volksraad must be thirty years of age, and either (*a*) be burghers by birth, or (*b*) have possessed the Outlander franchise for five years, be members of a Protestant Church, and reside and own landed property in the Transvaal. In May, 1888, Mr. J. F. Celliers was sworn in as Member for Barberton, being the first representative elected on behalf of the gold-fields.

This scheme, although it cannot be said that, from the Boer point of view, it was anything but a liberal offer, was far from satisfying the political aspirations of the Outlanders. Their dissatisfaction found various forms of expression, alike intemperate and measured. About the end of 1887, Sir Donald Currie announced, during a visit to Johannesburg, that he had the authority of the President to declare that some adequate form of representation in the Government would speedily be offered to the Outlanders. There can be little doubt that at this time Mr. Krüger, who had seen the shadow of bankruptcy too near to be pleasant, was honestly anxious to encourage the gold-mining industry, which had already more than tripled the income of the State. The fact that he

was re-elected to the presidency, by an overwhelming majority, early in the following year, strengthened his hands; if he had then taken a generous course of action all would have been well. But the deep-rooted Boer distrust of the foreigner was still to be reckoned with. The increasing number of aliens, to which it was not easy to foresee a limit, encouraged the fear that any reform in the method of naturalisation might, before many years were over, make the new-comers the real and constitutional masters of the land for which the Boers not unjustly felt that they alone had toiled and suffered; and the President conceived the unhappy idea of offering the Outlanders the shadow of political rights at the same time that he put the substance still further out of their reach.

To this end he devised his now famous plan. In June, 1888, he submitted to the Volksraad a scheme for a Second Chamber, which was "to have authority and power to make laws and enactments having reference to mining works and diggings, and to consider other subjects which the First Chamber might refer to it as the law should further determine. The laws and enactments passed by the Second Chamber were to become law, unless

the opinion of the Government should be different, or when there were petitions against them, or when members of the First Chamber desired to take these matters into consideration themselves." The First Chamber of the Volksraad was to remain in its then condition, except that, after the passing of the Act, no naturalised citizen would be competent to vote for or sit in it; and thus the period of residence to qualify for naturalisation might be reduced to two years, since it would only carry the right to representation in the Second Chamber.

The origin of this ingenious scheme was to be seen in the fact that the President made repeated references to the great influx of population, whereby the original burghers would soon be in a minority. He went so far as to state that the new-comers in a single year had been four times as many as the former inhabitants of the State, though he must here have meant only the enfranchised portion of the inhabitants, who numbered something over 12,000 at the census of 1890. Some discussion was followed by the postponement of this scheme for a year. In 1889, it was again brought forward, was approved "in tendency," and referred to a

committee, on whose report it was ordered to stand over for yet another year. Meantime the Outlanders became more and more outspoken in their demands, until the Boers came to regard Johannesburg as a centre of disaffection, and the roughest of the aliens returned the compliment by mobbing the President and insulting the Transvaal flag.

In June, 1890, the Second Chamber scheme became law, but not in its earlier and reasonable shape. It was hedged about with restrictions which made this a mere talking chamber, and deprived its deliberations of all weight with the Government, giving them no higher status than that of suggestions on which the President and the First Chamber might act, if they thought fit. The First Chamber, which was reduced to the original twenty-four members and given all legislative powers, was in future to be elected only by burghers who had been born in the Transvaal, whilst all burghers of two years' standing, who were over sixteen years of age, had votes for the second. At the same time the method of naturalisation was altered: candidates must be aged thirty, members of a Protestant Church, residents of four years' standing, owners of land; they must take the oath of

allegiance, and pay a fee of £5. What the Outlanders thought of this concession may be guessed from the fact that in October, 1894, only 548 of them had taken the trouble to be naturalised, and most of these were officials who were legally compelled to do so. At the same time there were over 18,000 full-fledged burghers.

In September, 1894, a new amendment of the constitution had the effect at once of making it easier for aliens to be naturalised, and of putting any real political power still further out of their reach. It was enacted that the First Chamber of the Volksraad should be elected by and from the first-class burghers, the Second Chamber by and from first and second-class burghers conjointly. First-class burghers were defined as white men who had resided in the Transvaal before May 29th, 1877, or who had taken an active part, on the Boer side, in the War of Independence (or, it was added in the following year, in the Malaboch war of 1894), and their sons from the age of sixteen. Second-class burghers included all the naturalised Outlanders and their sons from the age of sixteen. Naturalisation, now that so little importance attached to it, could be obtained after a registered

residence of two years, by taking the oath of allegiance and paying a fee of £2. The President and the Commandant-General were to be elected by first-class burghers only. It was added, as a sop to Cerberus, that second-class burghers might become first-class burghers after twelve years, by a special vote of the First Chamber in each case. The sons of aliens born in the Republic might be naturalised at eighteen and become first-class burghers, by a similar vote, ten years later. In this way it was hoped that the Outlanders would be contented with promises and possibilities, whilst any likelihood of their swamping the Boers at the polls was safely put out of the question.

There was a strong minority among the Boers themselves who had the political wisdom to discern that measures of this kind were akin to Mrs. Partington's struggle against the Atlantic. The Transvaal National Union, founded at Johannesburg in 1892 by the leading Outlanders, with "the independence of the South African Republic" and "equal political rights for all white inhabitants" for the two planks of its platform, had much of their sympathy. A strong Boer party followed General Joubert in his consistent opposition of

President Krüger's general anti-English policy. It is said to have included many of the best and most enlightened among the Boers, and gained ground rapidly in the years that followed the revival of Johannesburg. Its adherents declared that the gold-miners had, on this occasion, been encouraged, if not actually invited, by the Government, pointed to the obvious fact that the revenue from the gold-mines had risen by 1894 to nearly a million sterling, and urged alike the injustice and the inexpediency of squeezing the milch cow too far. At the Presidential election of 1893 Mr. Krüger's majority against General Joubert was a bare 800 out of a poll of 15,000. The renewed protest which the Outlanders raised against "commandeering" and taxation without representation, in 1894, found an echo in many Africander breasts, although the appeal to Lord Rosebery permitted the President again to hold his favourite bugbear of English interference before their eyes.

If the Outlander agitation had been confined to purely constitutional methods, it thus seems that it might have been crowned with success at no very distant date. The Boers themselves, in a parallel case, had exhausted constitutional methods

before they took up arms against their English "oppressors," and they must have ultimately recognised that, whether the Outlander demands were perfectly just or not, they were too serious to be wholly ignored. But the policy of President Krüger has again been fortunate enough to be assisted by external events. The raid of Dr. Jameson was accepted as an attempt to coerce the Republic, and, for the moment, all internal disagreements amongst the Boers have disappeared in sight of a common peril.

Here, however, one begins to encroach upon ground that is quite outside the province of the impartial historian. I have passed in review the various causes that have built up the South African Republic and that have threatened it with the doom of a city divided against itself. But what will come of them it is not my business to guess; that, as a Greek would have said, is among the things that lie upon the knees of the gods.

FINIS.

RICHARD CLAY AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BUNGAY.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
3 9015 00070 3226

DO NOT REMOVE
OR
MUTILATE CARD